STAR TREK IX

Star Trek: Insurrection

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STAR TREK IX

FADE IN:

1 TALL GRASS BLOWING GENTLY IN A BREEZE - DAY - (OPTICAL) 1 *

The sound of children playing, running through the grass... as one boy (ARTIM, 12) pokes his head out, we see by his unusual hair (TBD) that he's an alien... his clothes are simple, homespun. As other alien children pursue him in a game of tag into the rocky foothills, we BOOM UP to reveal a breathtaking view of a rural community along a vast sparkling lake... mountains rising in the background... some odd llama-like livestock graze on the hillside...

2 A FARM - LONG SHOT 2 *

A woman uses a hand pump to get well water... a man works the soil in his fields, wipes his brow, waving to --

3 A WOMAN (ANIJ, 38) 3

whose beauty immediately captivates us as she strolls past the farm, the wind barely jostling her closecut curly hair. She takes us to a busy outdoor farmers market at the edge of a hand-constructed village set against a natural rockface barrier. These are the Ba'ku people and from the opening shots we can feel the simple charm of this beautiful place... and who would blame us for wanting to be there, to escape to a life like this... where people seem to have all the time in the world... to chat with neighbors, taste a piece of fresh fruit and enjoy the day... Anij nods hello to people including SOJEF (male, 42), the community leader... she smiles as a vendor slices a piece of fruit for her...

4 NEW ANGLE - ANIJ - (OPTICAL) 4 *

From the point of view *of the rockface behind the village*. Although we may not realize it yet, we are watching through a window now... slightly discolored, pulling back to see a mysterious figure in an isolation suit standing incongruously beside her, his suit glowing with a green forcefield. None of the Ba'ku are aware of him as he takes readings with a sophisticated sensor device. Now our pullback reveals we're inside a duck blind. Low lighting levels. A bi-level gallery of Starfleet officers and members of an alien race (the Son'a) observe the peaceful village scene like sportswriters at the ballpark...

(CONTINUED)

12 HIS POV - THROUGH THE WINDOW - (OPTICAL) 12

of the man running. Two more glowing figures come out of the rocks behind him. One fires a weapon, barely missing the runner... children are all around but can't see them.

13 EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS - (OPTICAL) 13

The bright bolt of plasma surging out of thin air and the thunderous boom scares the children...

14 PEOPLE AT THE MARKET - (OPTICAL) 14*

react... the children run toward the village...

ANIJ
What is it? What's happening?

SOJEF
Children! Come quickly!

15 INT. DUCK BLIND - (OPTICAL) 15

The mission scientists are on their feet, watching...

GALLATIN
(to com)
Hold your fire!

He glances concerned to a female Starfleet Lieutenant who hits the companel...

LIEUTENANT
Base to Commander Data.

DATA'S COM VOICE
(muttering, haltingly)
Rerouting... microhydraulic...
power distribution... regulating
thermal... overload...

The running man (DATA) seems disoriented... he's running awkwardly toward us in the bulky suit...

LIEUTENANT
Data, report to base immediately.

DATA'S COM VOICE
Transferring... positronic...
matrix functions... engaging...
secondary protocols...

(CONTINUED)

The running man starts pulling at his headgear...

STARFLEET OFFICER #1
He's trying to remove the headpiece...

GALLATIN
All field units. Intercept the android.

16 ANGLE - THROUGH WINDOW - (OPTICAL) 16

as all the men in suits converge on the running man... but with superhuman strength, he tosses them aside with ease... Meanwhile Ba'ku people, unaware of the fight, greet their children back, happy they're safe...

17 EXT. MARKET - CONTINUOUS (OPTICAL) - ANGLE ON ARTIM 17

as he moves to Sojef, his father...

SOJEF
It must have been some kind of odd electrical storm...

But as Sojef speaks, Artim turns to see the floating head of Data DECLOAKING in mid-air barely a yard away as he removes his helmet... the boy yells... jumps back, falling as Data makes eye contact with him. The Ba'ku scatter... Sojef pulls the boy away to safety...

DATA
Secondary protocols... active.

We notice a slashing burn wound on Data's neck as he fights off invisible forces again... we hear a ripping crunch and a green forcefield sputters briefly -- a Son'a man in a torn isolation suit partially DECLOAKS as he is slammed to the ground, unconscious. Data strips off the rest of his suit revealing himself, continues to push away invisible men into fruit and vegetable stands knocking them over. He picks up a weapon from the unconscious Son'a, aims it at the rockface...

18 INT. DUCK BLIND - (OPTICAL) 18

The observers dive for cover as he points the weapon this way. But Data fires to the left of the window...

19 EXT. ROCKFACE - (OPTICAL) 19

And then fires again to the right... and again above... each hit knocking out generators... finally the rockface shimmers, like a computer image breaking up, and disappears revealing the high-tech station behind it...

20 ANGLE - (OPTICAL) 20

All the invisible men in suits DECLOAK in the village.

21 THROUGH THE DUCK BLIND WINDOW 21

The scientists begin to poke their heads up from the floor... exposed to the world outside...

22 THE BA'KU IN HIDING PLACES 22

including Anij, Artim and Sojef react with shock...

VARIOUS BA'KU
What is it? Who are they?

23 DATA 23

stands alone, satisfied with his mysterious work.

24 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 24

In orbit of an M-class planet.

25 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS 25

Close on the four Captain's pips on his uniform, and moving back to reveal BEVERLY CRUSHER helping JEAN-LUC PICARD fasten the collar on his jacket as DEANNA TROI briefs him, glancing at a PADD. All are wearing formal uniforms. They are running late. *

TROI
...Population three hundred million...

PICARD
Say the greeting again...

(CONTINUED)

TROI
Yew-cheen chef-faw ... emphasis on the 'cheen' and the 'faw'...

CRUSHER
You either need a new uniform or a new neck.

PICARD
'Yew-cheen chef-faw'... My collar size is exactly the same as it was at the Academy.

CRUSHER
(dry)
Sure it is. And your hair is still chestnut brown.

Our angle clearly establishes Picard's white hair... she finishes with the collar... overlapping the above dialogue: a chime at the door, Troi answers it, letting in WILL RIKER in his dress uniform...

RIKER
Our guests have arrived and are eating the floral arrangements on the banquet tables...

CRUSHER
I guess they don't believe in cocktails before dinner...

As Picard leads the way out the door...

TROI
(looking at her PADD)
Oh my God, are they vegetarians? That's not in here...

PICARD
Better have the chef whip up a light balsamic vinaigrette... something that goes well with chrysanthemums... *

26 INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 26

Very up-tempo dialogue... *

PICARD (CONT'D) * PERIM'S COM VOICE *
Yew-cheen chef-faw... * Bridge to Captain *
Picard...

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
Yes, Ensign...

PERIM'S COM VOICE
Command wants to know our ETA at the Goren system...

PICARD
(to Riker)
The Goren system...?

RIKER
They need us to mediate some territorial dispute...

PICARD
(frustrated)
We can't delay the archeological expedition to Hanoran Two. It would put us into the middle of monsoon season...

RIKER
(can't be helped)
The Diplomatic Corps is busy with Dominion negotiations.

PICARD
(sighs)
...so they need us to put out one more brush fire.
(beat)
Anyone remember when we used to be explorers?

They enter...

27 INT. TURBOLIFT - CONTINUOUS 27

PICARD
(refocusing)
'Yew-cheen chef-faw.'

RIKER
Deck ten.

TROI
(resuming her briefing)
Remember, they have a significantly less advanced technology than ours... they only achieved warp drive last year...

(CONTINUED)

CRUSHER
A year? And the Federation Council decided to make them a protectorate already?

PICARD
In view of our losses to the Borg and the Dominion, the Council feels we need all the allies we can get these days.

As the turbolift doors open, we see much activity, can hear music coming from the party... Picard puts on a brighter face. As they exit...

TROI
You'll be expected to dance with Regent Cuzar...

CRUSHER
Oh, I can't wait to see that...

28 INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 28

Several officers in dress uniforms move to make room for the Captain's entourage... moving with them...

FEMALE ENSIGN
Captain on deck!

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE
La Forge to Picard. Captain, I need to talk to you before you go into the reception...

Before Picard can respond, he runs into WORF...

WORF
Captain...

PICARD
Worf, what the hell are you doing here?

WORF
I was at the Manzar colony installing a new defense perimeter when I heard the Enterprise was in this sector...

RIKER
He's a little late, Geordi... can it wait?

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
Stop by my quarters later; I have a few ideas about Manzar security...
(non-stop, to Riker)
Have him come to the reception... we'll talk here...

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE
I don't think so Commander..

Picard moves into the banquet room, continuing to Worf --

PICARD
How's your bride?

RIKER
The Captain wants you to come over.

WORF
A challenge.

PICARD
The greatest compliment a Klingon can pay his wife.

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE
I'm on my way... tell him we've received a communique from Admiral Dougherty...

Picard's gone... doesn't hear:

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE (CONT'D)
It's about Data.

29 INT. BANQUET ROOM 29

Maybe thirty Starfleet officers, mostly human but a few Bajorans, Trills and Bolians peppered about... a small group of musicians play a festive tune. The crowd moves back as their Captain enters and Troi escorts him to REGENT CUZAR, 50 and her delegation of about eight extremely short aliens... she's at least a foot shorter than he is...

PICARD
Yew-cheen chef-faw, Regent Cuzar. Welcome aboard the Enterprise.

CUZAR
Captain Picard, may I welcome you in the time-honored tradition of my people...

An aide steps forward and she takes a shawl from him and reaches up to put it around Picard's neck... Picard has to make himself shorter to make it work... the other aliens throw tiny seeds over Picard and Cuzar (like rice at a wedding)... Picard smiles, sincerely enjoying the moment...

(CONTINUED)

CUZAR
We are so honored to be accepted within the great Federation family.

PICARD
I hope you enjoy the reception. Please excuse me. I need to greet some of my other guests. We have a dance later, I believe?

CUZAR
I look forward to it.

As Picard turns away, to Troi --

PICARD
How are we supposed to dance? Her head will be in my...

He's interrupted by GEORDI LA FORGE who approaches looking concerned, holding a PADD, hands it to Picard...

LA FORGE
Excuse me, sir. Admiral Dougherty's aboard a Son'a ship in sector four-four-one. He's requesting Data's schematics...

TROI
Is something wrong?

LA FORGE
The message doesn't say.

PICARD
(concerned)
Data should have been back by now. They were only scheduled to observe the Ba'ku village for a week.
(to Geordi)
Set up a secured com-link to the Admiral in the anteroom...

Geordi acknowledges, moves away... a Bolian science officer grabs Picard by the arm...

BOLIAN OFFICER
Captain, Hars Adislo from the Hatteras Colony. We met at the Nel Bato Conference last year, the thermionic transconductance seminar...?

As Picard reacts, smiling with no recollection...

30 A MONITOR -- INT. ANTEROOM OFF BANQUET ROOM - (OPTICAL) 30

Admiral MATTHEW DOUGHERTY, 69, a confident, charismatic officer is transmitting from a Son'a ship.

DOUGHERTY
He's not acknowledging any Starfleet protocols... not responding to any of our hails...

We pull back to see we're in a small room off the reception... Picard faces the monitor. Geordi observes. A Starfleet Ensign stands guard just outside the door to make sure they're not disturbed. * *

PICARD
You have no idea what precipitated his behavior?

DOUGHERTY
(shakes his head)
...And now he's holding our people hostage down there...

PICARD
The Enterprise can be at your position in two days, Admiral...

DOUGHERTY
That's probably not a good idea. Your ship hasn't been fitted for this region; there are environmental concerns...

PICARD
What kind of concerns?

DOUGHERTY
We haven't fully identified the anomalies yet. They're calling this whole area The Briar Patch... took us a day to reach a location where we could get a signal out to you. Just get me Data's schematics. I'll keep you informed.
(Picard acknowledges)
Dougherty out.

The screen returns to a starfield.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
Send him the schematics.

Geordi acknowledges.

PICARD
Ensign...

ENSIGN
(moving inside)
Sir?

PICARD
Report to the galley and tell the chef to skip the fish course.

The Ensign gives a puzzled reaction but an order is an order.

ENSIGN
Aye, sir.

He exits. Geordi gives his Captain a curious look.

PICARD
I want our guests to depart as quickly as etiquette allows. I'll ask Worf to delay his return to DS9 so he can join us. We're going to stop by sector four-four-one on our way to the Goren system.

LA FORGE
(understanding)
They... *are* in opposite directions, sir...

PICARD
(dry)
Are they...?

La Forge smiles, leaves. Picard takes a beat to collect himself and we may sense how the clutter in a Captain's life may wear him down... but the moment's over in an instant. He stretches his back, puts on a diplomat's face and returns to the reception...

31 EXT. SPACE - SON'A SHIP - (OPTICAL) 31

moving toward a ringed planet well in the distance, passing slowly through wisps of space matter... wonderful, glowing plasma tendrils like legs of a gigantic tarantula dotted by low density gas clouds...

32 INT. SON'A SHIP BODY ENHANCEMENT FACILITY - (OPTICAL) 32

Low lighting. Strange futuristic dialysis machines pump fluids in and out of reclined Son'a men and women... the women use powder and heavy but carefully applied make-up to obscure their faces. Son'a costumes are made of expensive fabrics with latinum chains and exquisite jewels as accessories, suggesting a wealthy culture that values materialism. Sexy female attendants from various alien races, dressed provocatively, work with laser tools to repair cracked, raw skin off Son'a faces. We move to find RU'AFO, 63, the Son'a Ahdar (Commander), reclining, getting an elaborate facial from two beauties, creams and oils massaged into his skin by their gentle fingertips...

RU'AFO
I never should have let you talk me into the duck blind in the first place...

Reveal Admiral Dougherty observing, wearing a crisp, Starfleet uniform... he looks and feels out of place here, but such are the demands of alien alliances...

RU'AFO (CONT'D)
Your Federation procedures have made this mission ten times as difficult as it needed to be...

DOUGHERTY
Our procedures were in place to protect the planet's population from unnecessary risk...

RU'AFO
Planet's population. *Six hundred people.* You want to avoid unnecessary risks? Next time leave your android home.

SON'A OFFICER #1'S COM VOICE
Bridge to Ahdar Ru'afo. We're approaching the planet.

He motions to the girls to finish up. Answering the call --

RU'AFO
Take us into a high orbit.
(as he rises from the chair)
Lie down, Admiral. The girls will take twenty years off your face... *

(CONTINUED)

DOUGHERTY
Another time.

Ru'afo studies his own face in the mirror...

RU'AFO
Your self-restraint puzzles me, Admiral. You continue to deny yourself every benefit this mission has to offer...

DOUGHERTY
I prefer to wait until we can share the benefits with all the people of the Federation...

Suddenly, boom! The ship is hit by a blast. Ru'afo reacts, leads the way out...

33 INT. SON'A BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 33

As Ru'afo and Dougherty enter...

RU'AFO
Report.

SON'A OFFICER #1
Phaser blast. Unknown origin.

RU'AFO
Raise shields.
(another blast)
Take us out of orbit.

SON'A OFFICER #1
They must be hiding in one of the nebula clusters...

SON'A OFFICER #2
Photon torpedos. Brace for impact!

Blam... again... and again... serious hits...

SON'A COMPUTER VOICE
Warning. Outer hull damage, deck three...

SON'A OFFICER #1
Visual contact!

On the viewscreen, the attacking ship moves suddenly into view from a low density gas cloud like a destroyer emerging from a fog bank... *

(CONTINUED)

it is a Federation Scout ship -- small but impressive, with windows at the forward cockpit... the Admiral reacts...

DOUGHERTY
That's *our* ship.

34 EXT. SPACE - CLOSE VIEW: THE SCOUT - (OPTICAL) 34

as it moves at us, firing one last blast which illuminates the pilot for an instant and we clearly see the face of Data through the window before he breaks off the attack, rolling back toward the ringed planet below... *

35 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 35

at warp, in normal space...

36 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS - (OPTICAL) 36

Close on the replicator. An allegro chamber music piece in the background... * *

PICARD (O.C.)
Tea. Earl Grey. Hot.

The tea appears as we pull back to reveal Picard studying a PADD... he reaches out for the tea without his eyes ever leaving his reading... walks across the room and sits at a dining table that has stacks of various work materials... more PADDS, charts and graphs and maps... a half-eaten salad sits in front of him... and in a move that would challenge the world's greatest juggler, he pokes a fork of salad into his mouth with one hand as he sips his tea with the other, finding a spot to prop the PADD so he can still read... and now, his mind asking a silent question, reaching over to grab a chart, and as he pulls it over, he also spills the salad plate splashing * gorgonzolla dressing over his jacket... sighs... a chime * at the door...

PICARD
Who is it?

RIKER (O.C.)
Commander Riker... *

Picard looks at himself, shrugs, what the hell...

PICARD
Come...

(CONTINUED)

Riker enters with a PADD, eyes drawn to Picard's stained jacket...

PICARD
I'm a casualty of a working lunch.

Picard takes off his jacket... and as the scene continues, he changes.

PICARD (CONT'D)
I've been going over the few star charts we have of this "Briar Patch". It's full of supernova remnants, false vacuum fluctuations...

Riker looks at the star chart, brushes it off...

RIKER
...and gorgonzolla cheese.

PICARD
We won't be able to go any faster than one-third impulse in that muck... anything dangerous turn up in the astrometric survey?

RIKER
(handing him the PADD)
Nothing our shields can't handle...

PICARD
So where are the 'environmental concerns' the Admiral was talking about?

RIKER
(shrugs)
The only unusual readings were low levels of metaphasic radiation from interstellar dust across the region...

WORF'S COM VOICE
Bridge to Captain Picard. We are approaching sector four-four-one.

PICARD
Slow to impulse, Commander. We're on our way.

Picard leads the way out...

37 EXT. SPACE - THE BRIAR PATCH - (OPTICAL) 37

The edge of the dangerous and beautiful region... moving to find the Enterprise approaching at impulse...

38 INT. BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 38

Seeing The Patch on the viewscreen... Worf at tactical, ENSIGN KELL PERIM, female Trill, 29, at Conn... Troi at command, La Forge at Ops... as Picard and Riker enter...

LA FORGE
Once we cross the perimeter, we'll lose communications with Starfleet, Captain.

PICARD
(to Troi)
Do you have all the files you need from command?

TROI
Everything I could find on the duck blind mission and the Son'a.

PICARD
(including Riker)
You have two days to become experts... Mister Worf, your job and mine will be to find a plan to safely capture Data.

Worf holds up a modified tricorder...

WORF
Sir, I have inserted one of Commander Data's spare actuation servos into this tricorder. Its operational range is only seven meters but it should shut him down...

PICARD
(appreciating his initiative)
It's good to have you back, Worf.
(he sits)
Slow to one-third. Take us in.

39 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 39

as it moves slowly into The Patch.

40 INT. ENTERPRISE LIBRARY 40

Significantly electronic... many computer stations... a few real books... Troi and Riker work at parallel computer stations... people are at other stations...

TROI
(off her computer)
The Son'a discovered an M-class planet with humanoid life six months ago. Turned out it's in Federation space, so they came to us to get approval for a sociological study. The Federation Council suggested it be a joint mission... *

RIKER
Why was Data assigned?

TROI
"Environmental concerns", again. An android could be safely exposed to the elements during the installation of a duck blind... * *

LIBRARIAN (O.C.)
Sssshhh...

They turn to see -- a middle-aged, prune-faced woman at a desk, looking sternly at them... Troi goes back to her reading but seems distracted... sees a paper notepad on the desk, rips off a shred and, during the following exchange, starts to press it between her thumb and forefinger into a little ball. Whispering now --

RIKER
I don't see anything to suggest the Son'a have any interest in sociology...

TROI
What <u>are</u> they interested in...?

RIKER
Wine, women and song.

TROI
You should feel right at home with them.

She throws the ball of paper and hits Riker on the side of the head...

he turns but she's looking innocently at her screen... he rolls a little paper ball himself...

RIKER
Collectors of precious metals, jewels...

TROI
(joking)
Hmm, I should feel right at home with them...

RIKER
You're in luck... it says here they've taken women from several races as indentured servants.

Just as he's about to throw his paper ball back at her... he sees the librarian staring at him... Riker, caught, sheepishly turns back to his computer... a beat...

TROI
Listen to this -- 'The Son'a have been suspected of producing mass quantities of the narcotic ketracel-white... their ships are rumored to be equipped with nucleonic subspace weapons *outlawed* by the Second Khitomer Accord...'

RIKER
(reacts)
Why would we be involved with these people?

TROI
Good question.

RIKER
You know what's funny -- there's nothing in the files about Son'a children. It's almost as if they don't exist...

TROI
(reacts)
Is there anything about a Son'a homeworld?

As he presses panels, scrolling data, she stands, leaning over Riker's shoulder to see his computer, putting one arm on the desk...

41 ANGLE EMPHASIZING HER BREAST 41

as it rests gently on his upper arm... and he's deeply aware of that breast touching him...

RIKER
(shakes his head)
According to this, there isn't one. It says they're nomadic...

As he continues to look, she casually plays with hair at the nape of his neck...

RIKER
You haven't done that in a long time...

TROI
What...?

RIKER
What you're doing to my neck...

TROI
(flirtatiously)
Was I doing something to your neck?

He pauses his scrolling as he comes to --

RIKER
Ah, here it is: "There is considerable anecdotal evidence suggesting some form of gametocytic damage has prevented the Son'a from procreating."

TROI
(reacts)
If that's true, they're a dying race.

Suddenly, a tiny ball of paper hits Riker...

RIKER
Hey...

He turns to see an alien ensign looking too innocently at his computer. The librarian's eyes fix on Riker and Troi, obvious troublemakers... Troi points to Riker...

TROI
He started it.

(CONTINUED)

Riker reacts, starts to leave... Troi follows...

RIKER
I didn't do anything, I swear it.

42 INT. WORF'S QUARTERS 42

Dark. Worf asleep in bed, an alarm already beeping...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Bridge to Commander Worf...

Worf begins to stir... then his eyes open and he realizes the alarm is going off... he sits up...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Worf?

WORF
Captain...?

PICARD'S COM VOICE
I don't know how they do it on Deep Space Nine... but on the Enterprise, we still report for duty on time.

Worf stands in the dark, bumping his head as he does...

INTERCUT:

43 INT. BRIDGE 43

Picard at command... La Forge at Ops... Perim at conn... LIEUTENANT NARA, male Bajoran, 35, at Tactical...

WORF'S COM VOICE
I'm sorry, sir... I... I must have slept through my alarm... I'm on my way...

PICARD
We'll skip the court martial this time... Picard out.

A beat as Picard listens to the sound of his ship, raises an eyebrow... we hear nothing... he moves forward to La Forge and Perim...

PICARD
Do you hear that?
(off their look)
Never mind.

He moves toward the ready room... but pauses again...

PICARD
You don't hear that?

PERIM
Hear what, Captain?

PICARD
When was the last time we adjusted our torque sensor alignment...

LA FORGE
Two months ago, sir...

PICARD
Check them.

La Forge and Perim work the controls, exchange a look at the results...

LA FORGE
The torque sensors *are* out of alignment... by twelve microns... you could *hear* that?

PICARD
(pleased with himself)
When I was an Ensign, I could detect a *three*-micron mis-alignment... *

NARA
Excuse me, sir. The Son'a ship with Admiral Dougherty aboard has entered tracking range...

PICARD
Try to hail them.

A disheveled and embarrassed Worf enters...

NARA
Admiral Dougherty responding.

Worf replaces Nara...

PICARD
Straighten your jacket, Commander. On screen...

44 ANGLE - INCLUDE THE VIEWSCREEN - (OPTICAL) 44

Dougherty and Ru'afo are sitting in Ru'afo's tactical room, opulently decorated for a spaceship.

DOUGHERTY
Captain, I wasn't expecting you.

PICARD
This was too important for the Enterprise to be on the sidelines, Admiral...

DOUGHERTY
I wish I had better news. Commander Data attacked us in the mission scout ship yesterday. Ru'afo and I have decided to send in an assault team...

PICARD
Sir, Commander Worf and I have been working on several tactical plans to safely...

RU'AFO
Your android has turned dangerously violent, Captain... Considerable damage was done to my ship. He must be destroyed.

DOUGHERTY
I know what Data means to Starfleet, Jean-Luc... but our crew is at the mercy of those people on the planet... *

PICARD
If our first attempt to capture Data fails, I will terminate him.
(beat)
I should be the one to do it. I'm his Captain. And his friend.

Dougherty pauses to consider but Ru'afo wants none of Picard.

RU'AFO
It isn't safe for you to remain in this area.

(CONTINUED)

DOUGHERTY
He's right. Our shields have been upgraded to protect against the environmental anomalies...

PICARD
We haven't noticed any ill effects.

The Admiral studies him a long beat, is sympathetic to Picard's position.

DOUGHERTY
All right. You have twelve hours, Captain. Then I want you out of The Briar Patch. In the meantime, we'll be heading out to the perimeter to call for Son'a reinforcements in case you fail.

PICARD
Understood.

DOUGHERTY
Good luck. Dougherty out.

His image disappears. On Picard's expression...

45 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 45

As a bay door slides open and a shuttle emerges... moves through the gas clouds toward the beautiful ringed planet...

46 INT. SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 46

Worf and Picard at the controls...

WORF
Sensors are not picking up any ships coming from the surface...

PICARD
Transmit a wide band co-variant signal. That'll get his attention.

WORF
(touches panel)
He might be using the planet's rings to mask his approach.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
(off sensors)
The metaphasic radiation in those rings is in a state of extreme flux. Steer clear of them, Mister Worf...

A beat. Watching and waiting.

PICARD
Come out, come out wherever you are...

WORF
Sir?

PICARD
Hmm? Oh, it's just something my mother used to...

Suddenly, wham -- a blast...

PICARD
Hold on.

He hits the controls and they climb sharply...

47 EXT. SPACE - THE SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 47

climbing... evading phaser shots from the gas cloud...

48 INT. SHUTTLE 48

PICARD
Open all hailing frequencies.
(Worf acknowledges)
Data, this is Captain Picard...

49 INT. SCOUT - CLOSEUP DATA - (OPTICAL) 49

Windows showing a gas cloud outside...

PICARD'S COM VOICE (CONT'D)
...please acknowledge...

Data ignores him, continues to fire...

50 EXT. SPACE - THE SCOUT - (OPTICAL) 50

moving through dark clouds, firing phasers...

51 INT. SHUTTLE 51

More shots connect... more sharp evasive maneuvers...

PICARD
Track the incoming fire and triangulate his coordinates...

WORF
Bearing one-two-seven mark six... range, three thousand seven hundred meters...

Picard takes the ship into a dive...

52 ANGLE THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW - (OPTICAL) 52

The clouds break away revealing the scout ship seen from the top, the planet providing a dramatic backdrop...

WORF
Sir, if we fire a tachyon burst, it may force him to reset his shield harmonics. When he does, we could beam him out...

PICARD
Make it so.

53 EXT. SPACE - SHUTTLE/SCOUT - (OPTICAL) 53

as the scout dives trying to avoid the shuttle's tachyon bursts... breaking into the atmosphere... and now the rest of this fight all takes place in the upper atmosphere of the planet... a tachyon burst connects...

54 INT. SHUTTLE 54

WORF
Direct hit. He's resetting his shield harmonics...

PICARD
Beam him out!

55 NEW ANGLE INCLUDING THE TRANSPORTER PAD - (OPTICAL) 55

which wheezes unsuccessfully... they react...

WORF
He's activated a transport inhibitor.

56 EXT. UPPER ATMOSPHERE - SCOUT/SHUTTLE - DAY (OPTICAL) 56

The scout launches a pair of torpedos from its stern, the shuttle is forced to veer away to avoid them... one touches the shields, explodes... the shuttle is thrown briefly out of control...

57 INT. SHUTTLE 57

Picard works hard to stabilize the ship...

WORF
Scanners are off line!

PICARD
(trying to make visual contact)
I've lost him... where the hell did he go?

Then, wham... wham... WHAM! Gas shoots from the ceiling... Worf tries to stop it...

58 THROUGH THE WINDOW - (OPTICAL) 58

to see the Scout zooming past, so close that Picard and * Data can even make eye contact...

PICARD
He can fly a ship, he anticipates tactical strategies, his brain is obviously functioning...
(beat)
We've seen how he responds to threats. How might he respond to...

With an intriguing idea, he hits the companel again...

PICARD
Data... Two women in Miami Beach. One says to the other, "That's a lovely diamond you're wearing, Mrs. Klopman." The other says, "Thank you, it's the famous Klopman Diamond, but it comes with a curse..."

(CONTINUED)

Worf looks at him curiously...

59 INT. SCOUT 59

Data pauses in his attack to listen...

PICARD'S COM VOICE (CONT'D)
..."A curse?", says the first... "What's the curse?" The second looks at her and says...

DATA
(to himself)
"Mister Klopman!"

PICARD'S COM VOICE
"Mister Klopman!" *

Data's programming clicks back to the fight. He fires again.

60 INT. SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 60*

Wham! Picard makes another evasive maneuver...

WORF
Sir, with all due respect, this is no time to be telling jokes...

PICARD
That's one of Data's *favorite* jokes...

Another shot lands.

WORF
He's not laughing.

PICARD
(beat, a new idea)
Do you know Gilbert and Sullivan?

WORF
Nosir, I haven't had a chance to meet all the new crew members since I've been back...

PICARD
They're composers, Worf, from the nineteenth century. Data was rehearsing a part in *H.M.S. Pinafore* before he left...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (CONT'D)
(singing to com)
"A British tar is a soaring soul, As free as a mountain bird, His energetic fist should be ready to resist A dictatorial word..."

Picard looks at Worf, nods, join me! Worf gives him an exasperated look... Picard begins to enter commands into the computer as he continues to sing... *

61 INT. SCOUT 61

PICARD'S COM VOICE (CONT'D)
"His nose should pant and his lip should curl, His cheeks should flame and his brow should furl..."

Data reacts. From somewhere inside his damaged brain, he recalls this song. He starts to sing to himself...

DATA/PICARD'S COM VOICE
(together)
"His bosom should heave and his heart should glow, And his fist be ready for a knock-down blow..."

62 INT. SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 62

The lyrics are scrolling on a monitor now... a bouncing ball making it easier for Worf to follow... *

PICARD
(to Worf)
Sing!

PICARD & WORF *
"His nose should pant and his lip should curl, His cheeks should flame and his brow should furl..."

63 INT. SCOUT 63

And Data sings in unison --

DATA/PICARD & WORF'S COM VOICES
"...His bosom should heave and his heart should glow...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DATA/PICARD & WORF'S COM VOICES (CONT'D)
And his fist be ready for a knock-down blow..."

64 INT. SHUTTLE 64

Picard catches his breath, turns off the companel.

PICARD
He's stopped firing.

Suddenly from the speaker --

DATA'S COM VOICE
"His eyes should flash with an inborn fire, His brow with scorn be wrung; He never should bow down to a domineering frown, Or the tang of a tyrant tongue..."

PICARD
(smiles, triumphant)
Prepare the docking clamps.

Worf moves to a rear panel as Picard sings with Data...

PICARD/DATA'S COM VOICE
"...His foot should stamp..."

65 INT. SCOUT (OPTICAL) 65

Data, mesmerized by the song, is not paying attention to his sensors and doesn't notice the shuttle through the window behind him moving closer...

DATA/PICARD'S COM VOICE
"...and his throat should growl, His hair should twirl and his face should scowl..."

66 EXT. SCOUT AND SHUTTLE - DAY - CONTINUOUS (OPTICAL) 66

As the shuttle moves within yards, even *feet*, of the scout... sliding under the belly of Data's craft...

DATA/PICARD'S VOICES
(muffled)
"...His eyes should flash and his breast protrude, And this should be his customary attitude --"

67 CLOSE - THE DOCKING CLAMP - (OPTICAL) 67

on the roof of the shuttle extends and with a magnetic jolt attaches itself to the scout.

DATA/PICARD'S VOICES
...His foot should stamp and his throat should growl..."

68 INT. SCOUT 68

Data feels the jolt, reacts, stops singing, his programs clicking back into a defense mode...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
"His hair should twirl and his face should scowl..."

Data checks his sensors, hits a panel and...

69 EXT. SCOUT AND SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 69

as the scout rocks back and forth trying to shake the shuttle loose...

70 INT. SHUTTLE 70

Picard and Worf hold on for dear life...

WORF
Sir, inertial coupling is exceeding tolerance... if we don't release him, he may destroy both vessels...

PICARD
I'm not letting go of him.

71 EXT. SCOUT AND SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 71

They begin to spin and spiral downward...

72 INT. SCOUT - (OPTICAL) 72*

Data still trying to free his ship... the surface spinning and looming closer through the window...

COMPUTER VOICE
Warning. Impact with surface...

73 INT. SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 73

The same view of the surface through their window...

COMPUTER VOICE
...in twenty seconds.

PICARD
Reroute emergency power to inertial dampers!

WORF
The damping sequencer was damaged by phaser fire!

PICARD
Transferring controls to manual.

COMPUTER VOICE
Warning. Impact with surface...

74 INT. SCOUT - (OPTICAL) 74

As before.

COMPUTER VOICE
...in ten seconds.

75 INT. SHUTTLE - (OPTICAL) 75

WORF
Damping field established!

PICARD
Maximum power!

76 EXT. SCOUT AND SHUTTLE (OPTICAL) 76

The shuttle gains control sweeping both ships into a hard arc parallel to the surface, only a dozen yards above the surface.

77 INT. SCOUT (OPTICAL) 77

Data reacts to a hatch being blown open on the floor behind him, turns to see Worf aiming the modified tricorder at him... Worf presses a button, nothing happens... Data looks curiously at him... *

(CONTINUED)

then lunges at him, but Worf extends his arm and presses the button again and Data shuts off in mid-lunge and falls motionless, inches from Worf. He presses his combadge...

WORF
Captain...

78 INT. SHUTTLE 78

WORF'S COM VOICE
Commander Data is safely in custody.

Picard takes a deep breath... satisfied.

79 EXT. SPACE - BRIAR PATCH - FOUR SON'A SHIPS - (OPTICAL) 79

On the way back. Ru'afo's ship in the lead. Two of the others are huge, menacing vessels; one is a science ship.

80 INT. SON'A TACTICAL ROOM - (OPTICAL) 80

Ru'afo and Dougherty are observing a simulation of a space procedure on a monitor... we will understand more about it later, but for now, all we notice is an extraordinary piece of space hardware with brilliant sail-like collectors extended toward the rings of the planet.

RU'AFO
The collector has performed perfectly in every simulation...

A Son'a officer enters... Ru'afo pauses the simulation...

SON'A OFFICER #1
Sir, the Enterprise reports the android has been captured. Captain Picard is proceeding to the surface to free the hostages.

RU'AFO
(to Dougherty)
We don't want him going anywhere near the surface. Tell him his crew's spent enough time unprotected in that environment.

DOUGHERTY
And leave the hostages down there? Not a good idea.

(CONTINUED)

RU'AFO
We can be at the planet by tomorrow morning.

DOUGHERTY
Picard will get our people safely off the planet... that's our first concern. As soon as it's done, I'll pull the Enterprise out of there.

Ru'afo acknowledges unhappily.

DOUGHERTY
(to the officer)
Send Picard our congratulations. Ask him to contact us when the hostages are out of danger...

81 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY (OPTICAL) 81

Hardly in danger, the hostages are sitting at wooden tables with the Ba'ku having lunch, the Son'a quietly keeping to themselves at separate tables. To the side, Artim and friends play a game (TBD) that displays extraordinary hand-eye coordination, well beyond human abilities.

82 ANGLE - PICARD, TROI AND CRUSHER 82

and several engineers enter the village on foot, phasers drawn, their faces curious at the picnic before them... the hum of conversation fades... for a moment, it almost seems that the hostages are sorry to see them... Gallatin and the Starfleet lieutenant move to Picard...

GALLATIN
Captain, Subahdar Gallatin, Son'a Command.

LIEUTENANT
Lieutenant Curtis, attaché to Admiral Dougherty.

PICARD
Are you all right?

LIEUTENANT
We've been treated extremely well by these people.

The children have resumed their game. Troi observes them with keen interest... Picard notices...

PICARD
Counselor?

TROI
They have an incredible clarity of perception, Captain. I've never encountered a species with such mental discipline...

Sojef, Anij and several of the Ba'ku, including another village leader, TOURNEL (35), move toward them. *

SOJEF
My name is Sojef, Captain...

PICARD
Jean-Luc Picard... my officers, Doctor Crusher and Counselor Troi.

SOJEF
Would you like something to eat?

PICARD
No, we're here to... *rescue* them.

SOJEF
As you wish. But I would ask you to disarm yourselves. This village is a sanctuary of life.

Picard measures the request... then holsters his phaser... the rest of the away team does the same...

PICARD
(to Crusher and Troi)
Prepare the 'hostages' for transport...

CRUSHER
They should be quarantined before joining the ship's population.

Picard nods. They move off with Gallatin and the Lieutenant. The work crew moves to disassemble the duck blind.

PICARD
(to Sojef)
We were under the impression they were being held against their will.

ANIJ
It's not our custom to have guests here at all, let alone hold anyone against their will.

Picard makes eye contact with Anij... her tone is not harsh, but we can sense an inner strength in this woman.

SOJEF
The artificial lifeform would not allow them to leave. He told us they were our enemies and more would follow.

ANIJ
Are *you* our enemy?

SOJEF
Anij...

PICARD
My people have a strict policy of non-interference with other cultures. In fact, it's our Prime Directive.

ANIJ
(dry, with a smile)
Your directive apparently doesn't include *spying* on other cultures.

PICARD
If I were in your shoes, I'd feel the same way after what happened.
(beat)
The 'artificial lifeform' is a member of my crew. Apparently, he became... ill...

TOURNEL
There did seem to be a phase variance in his positronic matrix that we were unable to repair.

Picard reacts, not the sort of thing one expects to hear from someone in a place like this...

ANIJ
I believe the Captain finds it hard to believe that we'd have any skills repairing a positronic device...

SOJEF
Our technological abilities aren't apparent because we've chosen not to employ them in our daily lives. We believe when you create a machine to do the work of a man, you take something away from the man.

ANIJ
(don't take us lightly)
But at one time, we explored the galaxy just as you do...

PICARD
You have warp capability?

ANIJ
Capability, yes. But where can warp drive take us, except away from here...?

Clearly establishing that she and her people have very little interest in life beyond their world. Picard allows himself to take in this glorious setting... a hummingbird hovers briefly nearby... it is the kind of paradise that would appeal to any contemporary man trying to escape the clutter of his life if only for a brief respite... and at least, to that extent --

PICARD
I understand.

In the background, the Starfleet hostages embrace their hosts as they say farewell...

PICARD
I apologize for our intrusion.

83 INT. READY ROOM - (OPTICAL) 83

Picard talks to Dougherty on a monitor...

PICARD
...and because they have warp capabilities, the consequences to their society are minimal...

DOUGHERTY
You've done a terrific job, Jean-Luc. Now, pack your bags and get the hell out of there. How's Data?

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
In stasis. La Forge is completing the diagnostic.

DOUGHERTY
(acknowledges)
I'll need all your paperwork tomorrow. We're heading back your way. I'll send you our coordinates as we get closer so you can rendezvous with us and transfer the crew and equipment on your way out.

PICARD
You're not finished here?

DOUGHERTY
Just a few loose ends to tie up. Dougherty out.

Picard turns off the monitor, glances at the pile of work PADDS -- his "paperwork" -- on his desk without pleasure... picks one up and begins to study it for a beat... then is drawn to the window, where he can see the warm inviting planet below. *

84 INT. TROI'S OFFICE 84

She's sitting on the sofa making some notes on a PADD when the door chimes...

TROI
Come in.
(Riker enters)
Hi.

RIKER
Got a minute? I... need a little counseling.
(off her surprise)
First time for everything. Do I... lie down... or what?

TROI
Whatever makes you comfortable...

Riker lies down, only he winds up with his head on her lap looking up at her...

TROI
This isn't one of the usual therapeutic postures...

(CONTINUED)

RIKER
But it's comfortable.

TROI
Why don't you try sitting up?

RIKER
Or you could try lying down.

TROI
You're in quite a mood today.

He finally sits up, stealing a kiss along the way... she rises shocked but not upset...

TROI
Do you really need counseling or did you come down here to play?

Riker is on his feet now, approaching her. She retreats.

RIKER
Both.
(off her look)
I think I'm having a mid-life crisis...

TROI
(retreating)
...I believe you...

RIKER
...I'm not sleeping well...

TROI
...Doctor Crusher has something that'll take care of that...

She allows him to catch her...

RIKER
What I need, I can't get from Doctor Crusher...
(inches away)
Counselor, do you think it's possible for two people to go back in time to fix a mistake they've made?

TROI
On this ship, anything can happen. And usually does.

He closes the gap between them, kisses her deeply.

TROI
Augh.

RIKER
Augh?

TROI
I never kissed you with a beard before.

She pushes him out the door...

RIKER
I kiss you and you say 'augh'?!

She hits the panel and the door slides closed in his face... a tiny grin comes to her face...

85 INT. ENGINEERING CORRIDOR - MOVING WITH PICARD & LA FORGE 85

La Forge has a headache he's trying to work through... he shows Picard several burned components...

LA FORGE
I took these out of Data's neural net... they contain memory engrams...

PICARD
How were they damaged?

LA FORGE
By a Son'a weapon.
(off Picard's look)
There's no doubt about it, sir. That's what made Data malfunction.

PICARD
The Son'a reports claim they didn't fire until *after* he malfunctioned.

LA FORGE
I don't believe it happened that way.

PICARD
Why would they fire at him without provocation?

LA FORGE
All I know is that he was functioning normally until he was shot. Then, his fail-safe system was activated...

PICARD
Fail-safe?

LA FORGE
His ethical and moral subroutines took over all of his basic functions...

PICARD
So, you're saying he still knew the difference between right and wrong.

LA FORGE
In a sense, that's all he knew. The system is designed to protect him against anyone who might try to take advantage of his memory loss.

PICARD
And yet he attacked *us*. And told the Ba'ku we were a threat...

'Why?' is the unspoken question on Picard's face.

86 ANGLE 86

They reach a door with a significant security system in place... Geordi hits several panels... and it slides open to reveal a closet-sized space with Data mounted on the wall in a diagnostic device...

PICARD
Can I talk to him?

LA FORGE
(nods)
His circuits have re-initialized.

As Geordi works controls, Picard notices his eye discomfort...

PICARD
Implants bothering you?

LA FORGE
It's nothing. I'm just tired.

(CONTINUED)

He presses panels... Data opens his eyes, surprised...

PICARD
Hello, Data...

DATA
Captain...?

PICARD
You're aboard the Enterprise.

LA FORGE
You've had a serious malfunction.

DATA
(going inward a beat)
I seem to be missing several memory engrams...

Geordi holds up the damaged components for him to see.

DATA
Yes... that looks like them.
(re: the forcefield)
Am I considered a threat, sir?

Picard looks to La Forge who shakes his head, not any more, and Picard releases the forcefield himself.

PICARD
What's the last thing you remember, Data...

DATA
(searching his memory)
'Two women in Miami Beach...'

PICARD
From the mission...

DATA
I was in an isolation suit collecting physiometric data on Ba'ku children. My last memory is going into the hills, following a boy...

87 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY - (OPTICAL) 87

Artim is playing with a tiny 'palm-pet', a colorful cross between a caterpillar and a jellyfish that crawls over his hand and between his fingers, as Sojef moves over with Picard and Data... the boy looks at Data with fear in his eyes. Data can't help but notice...

(CONTINUED)

SOJEF
Artim, do you remember where you were on the day of lightning when the artificial lifeform appeared to us?

ARTIM
In the hills, by the dam.

PICARD
Can you show us?

Artim puts his pet in a pocket (or it can have its own little pouch on Artim's belt if he has no pockets) and leads the way. Several Ba'ku including Anij and Tournel curiously follow. As Picard makes eye contact with her, she moves over...

ANIJ
Haven't you disrupted our lives enough...?

She says it gently, but honestly...

PICARD
I understand how you feel. We just want to retrace Data's movements that day...

ANIJ
Why?

PICARD
(a cautious reply)
I don't like to leave questions unanswered.

ANIJ
(evenly)
Then you must spend your life answering questions.

She moves away. Picard watches her; she doesn't look back.

88 ANGLE ON DATA 88

who notices Artim still glancing at him with fear. To reassure him --

DATA
There is no need for concern. I am operating within normal parameters now.

(CONTINUED)

ARTIM
You're what?

DATA
I am better.

The android's manner only seems to frighten Artim more. Before Data can say anything else, Sojef comes and leads him away, giving Data a cool smile that says, in effect, I don't want any *artificial lifeform* talking to my son. Data reacts. After a thoughtful beat, moves to walk with Picard.

DATA
I believe the boy is... *afraid*... of me.

PICARD
It's nothing personal Data. You have to remember these people have rejected technology. And you...

DATA
... I am the personification of everything they have rejected.

PICARD
Until this week, that young man probably never saw a machine, let alone one that walks and talks...

DATA
And I do not believe I made a very good first impression.

It clearly bothers Data to be the object of fear. The boy glances over his shoulder once more at the android, looks quickly away...

89 LONG SHOT 89

as the group moves into the rocky foothills...

90 PICARD 90

enchanted by the natural beauty, the antithesis of clutter.

91 NEW ANGLE 91

They come to a brook.

Artim hops on one foot across rocks in the water and without stopping to think, Picard does the same thing, looking like a little boy... then notices a curious look from Data which makes him collect himself and adjust his jacket. Anij glances over at Sojef with concern. The others cross in adult fashion.

92 COMING OVER A RISE - TO SEE A SMALL LAKE 92

On the far end is a dam with a light waterfall. *

ARTIM
I saw the first bolt of lightning over there...

As they move toward the dam... *

93 INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS - BATHROOM 93

Close on a 24th century container of Gillette Foamy Shaving Cream ("For Weightless Environments!")... finding a female hand with a straight razor moving to Riker's face... his chin and cheeks lathered with cream... and the hand is Troi's and they're in the bathtub together in a bubble bath... she expertly moves the blade across his face, leaving a swath of bare chin...

WORF'S COM VOICE
Bridge to Riker.

RIKER
Can I get back to you, Worf?

WORF'S COM VOICE
Admiral Dougherty's on the com-link, sir.

RIKER
(sighs)
Patch him through.
(the computer bleeps)
Yes, Admiral.

INTERCUT:

94 INT. SON'A TACTICAL ROOM 94*

Dougherty in the foreground; behind him a Son'a physician is pulling green scum from subcutaneous boils under the skin of Ru'afo's neck with a syringe...

(CONTINUED)

DOUGHERTY
Why haven't you left orbit yet?

RIKER
Captain Picard is still on the surface, sir.

DOUGHERTY
Doing what?

RIKER
He didn't want to leave until we could adequately explain why Data malfunctioned. His future in Starfleet could depend on it.

Dougherty exchanges a concerned look with Ru'afo...

DOUGHERTY
Remind the Captain his twelve hours are up. I want you out of there.

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Yes, sir.

DOUGHERTY
Dougherty out.

Ru'afo's eyes are closed, as the green goo moves from his neck to the doctor's syringe...

SON'A DOCTOR
Your body is producing far too many toxins... we've reached the limit of genetic manipulation...

RU'AFO
I won't *need* any more genetic manipulation if our Federation friends will allow us to *complete* this mission.

He opens his eyes, gives Dougherty a pointed look...

95 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - DAY 95

Picard, Data and the Ba'ku have moved toward the dam where Data is having trouble with his tricorder... *

DATA
Tricorder functions are limited due to heavy deposits of kelbonite in these hills... *

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
How about a passive radiation scan?

Data adjusts his tricorder... reacts...

DATA
Curious, there appear to be strong neutrino emissions coming from the lake...

Staying with Data as he follows the tricorder to the edge of the lake... a brief pause... and then in a Harold Lloyd sort of moment, he steps into the lake up to his ankles, pauses again to look at the tricorder and then continues to walk straight into the lake until he disappears under water.

96 ARTIM 96

reacts, astounded... looks to Picard...

ARTIM
Can he breathe under water?

PICARD
Data doesn't breathe.

ARTIM
Won't he rust?

PICARD
(smiles to himself)
No.

The boy turns his wide eyes back toward the lake.

97 UNDERWATER - DATA (OPTICAL) 97

An eel and a fish investigate him as he stands on the lake bottom, examining his tricorder...

98 EXT. LAKE - DAY 98

Data emerges... calling --

DATA
Sir, I believe I know what is causing the neutrino emissions...

He climbs to the top of the earthen dam and turns a heavy wheel that might usually require the strength of two men,

(CONTINUED)

opening a floodgate... as he does --

ARTIM
(fascinated)
Are there other machines like him in the offland?

SOJEF
The offland is no concern of yours.

As Data moves back to them... the group reacts as they see --

99 ANGLE (OPTICAL) 99

a strange displacement of water appearing as the lake drains... something invisible is sitting in the water... a bird lands on top of it... and as the water sinks lower, spilling off the sides of the invisible object, the shape is revealed to be that of a cloaked spaceship.

100 PICARD AND DATA 100

PICARD
A *ship.*

DATA
It is clearly Federation in origin, Captain.

PICARD
(quoting Dougherty)
'Just a few loose ends to tie up.'

As they move to a rowboat... Artim begins to follow but Sojef puts a firm arm on his shoulder.

SOJEF
We are not interested in such things.

Anij looks to Sojef...

ANIJ
I am.

And she hops on board the rowboat with Picard and Data... decidedly not trusting either of them to go alone...

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
It might be wiser for you stay on shore.

ANIJ
This is my world, Captain. If one of your ships has been hidden here, I have a right to know why...

Anij has grabbed an oar and pushes them away from shore... as Data and Picard exchange a glance, Picard takes the oar from her and...

101 WIDE - (OPTICAL) 101

Picard and Data row closer to the invisible ship.

102 CLOSER - THE ROWBOAT 102

ANIJ
Do you think anyone's inside?

PICARD
There's no way to know. The cloaking device would mask any lifesigns.

Data presses controls on his tricorder. A hatch opens. Picard and Data draw phasers...

103 INT. HOLOGRAPHIC SHIP/VILLAGE - (OPTICAL) 103

As they climb in to find themselves in an identical image of the Ba'ku village. Anij is stunned...

DATA
(off tricorder)
It is a holographic projection.

Moving to a gap that shows the metal holo-grid...

DATA (CONT'D)
Incomplete, I might add.

PICARD
(to Anij)
What you're seeing is a computer driven image created by photons and forcefields...

(CONTINUED)

ANIJ
I know what a hologram is, Captain. The question is -- why would someone want to make one of our village?

PICARD
There was nothing about this in your mission agenda, Data...?

DATA
Nosir.

PICARD
(beat, considering)
If you were following the boy and discovered this ship...

DATA
...I might have been shot to protect the secret of its existence.

PICARD
(beat, musing aloud)
What possible purpose could a duplicate village have except... to *deceive the Ba'ku*...

ANIJ
Deceive us?

PICARD
To move you off this planet. You go to sleep one night in your village... wake up the next morning in this flying holodeck transported en masse. A week later, maybe a month, you've been relocated on a similar planet without ever realizing it.

DATA
Why would the Federation or the Son'a wish to move the Ba'ku?

PICARD
I don't know.

We may notice a look in Anij's eyes - she *knows* why but doesn't intend to say. Picard and Data don't notice her reaction...

104 ANGLE - (OPTICAL) 104

Suddenly wham! -- a plasma charge is fired from the shadows of the "village" hologram... and then another and another... the shots hit walls revealing portions of the holo-grid (an effect we will see again later during the final action). Plasma ricochets off the walls spraying sparks over them all... as Data fires back, Picard grabs Anij and shoves her out the hatch for her safety...

105 ANGLE OUT THE HATCH 105

as she falls several yards into the water making a big splash... Picard turns back and starts firing...

106 INT. HOLO-SHIP - (OPTICAL) 106

A brief, intense exchange of shots... creating more gaps in the holo-image... and finally a Son'a officer falls off the roof of a holo-building, unconscious.

PICARD
Computer, end program and decloak the vessel.

And as the holo-image DEMATERIALIZES, they're standing on a holodeck.

107 EXT. HOLO-SHIP - (OPTICAL) 107

DECLOAKING... Anij splaying her arms to keep afloat in the water... Picard and Data stick their heads out of the hatch...

PICARD
Are you all right?

ANIJ
I can't swim!

Data and Picard promptly jump in after her...

PICARD
(reaching for her)
Don't panic...

ANIJ
(with some humor)
I've been shot at... thrown into the lake out of an invisible ship that's come to abduct us all...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANIJ (CONT'D)
what's there to panic about?

DATA
In the event of a water landing, I have been designed to serve as a flotation device.

He twists his neck a certain way and we hear a slight technical re-alignment and suddenly he floats... she hangs on as Picard swims over to retrieve the rowboat...

108 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - (OPTICAL) 108

Data and Picard MATERIALIZE... Worf, sporting a large red mark on his nose, observes. Picard is still wet and angry... on the move...

WORF
The Son'a who attacked you has regained consciousness in the brig, sir. He is not talking.

PICARD
Did any of the hostages mention a cloaked ship during their debriefings?

WORF
No sir...

PICARD
Debrief them again.
(noticing)
Have you been in a fight, Commander?

WORF
(humiliated)
No, sir. It is a gorch.

PICARD
Gorch?

Data leans in and whispers the translation into Picard's ear... Picard is embarrassed he brought it up...

PICARD
Oh... well, it's hardly... noticeable...

Off Data's deadpan look at Picard, as they exit...

109 INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 109

Riker with his clean shaven face moving to meet them... Picard and Data react... Riker smiles...

RIKER
Smooth as an android's bottom, eh, Data?

DATA
I... beg your pardon, sir?

For the rest of the sequence, Data observes Riker's chin. Moving to the turbolift...

RIKER
Admiral Dougherty wants to know why we haven't left yet...

PICARD
We're not going anywhere.

Worf and Riker exchange a glance as they enter...

110 INT. TURBOLIFT - CONTINUOUS 110

PICARD (CONT'D)
Deck five.

RIKER
(re: the gorch)
You Klingons never do anything small, do you...

The doors close. Ignoring Riker --

WORF
Doctor Crusher asked to talk to you when you returned...

PICARD
Picard to Crusher...

111 INT. SICKBAY 111

Beverly is examining Geordi's eyes...

CRUSHER
Captain, the Son'a hostages declined to be examined. I had them confined to quarters.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD'S COM VOICE
And our people?

CRUSHER
They all have slightly elevated levels of endorphin production... probably the result of the environmental anomalies here...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Are they in any danger?

CRUSHER
Not at all. They're fine... in fact, they're *better* than fine. Increased metabolism, high energy, improved muscle tone. We should all be so lucky.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Very good, Doctor. Picard out.

112 INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 112

coming out of the turbolift toward Picard's quarters...

PICARD
The Son'a officers are not to be released until I've met with Ahdar Ru'afo.

He enters his quarters. Data finally submits to his curiosity and runs a finger along Riker's chin...

DATA
No, sir. It is not.
(off Riker's look)
As smooth as an android's bottom.

113 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS 113

As he enters...

PICARD
Computer, music.

Picard's favorite chamber music comes on...

PICARD
No. Not that. Something else. Armstrong, Louis. "Potato Head Blues."
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (CONT'D)
(as the music comes on, his tension easing)
That's more like it...

Picard moves to...

114 INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 114

He takes off his jacket and shirt... and begins to towel himself dry... as he glances in the mirror... his towel patting his face, slows to a stop as he stares at himself in the mirror...

115 CLOSE - THE HAIR AROUND HIS EAR 115

is changing color, no longer all white, it is now predominantly chestnut brown.

116 PICARD 116

looks, his mind adding up all the strange little things that have been happening on the ship...

117 EXT. ANIJ'S HOME - NIGHT 117

Picard knocks on a door... it is opened by Anij...

PICARD
How old are you?

TIME CUT:

118 INT. ANIJ'S HOME - NIGHT 118

Austere but inviting with a warm fire... Sojef, Tournel and Artim have joined them... Artim spoons hot cider from a kettle into a cup, offers it to Picard... in the background, in an adjoining room, Anij, Sojef and Tournel complete a sidebar discussion and then return...

ANIJ
We've decided to tell you what you want to know, Picard... no other offlander has ever heard it...
(smiles lightly)
But we know how you don't like to 'leave questions unanswered'...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANIJ (CONT'D)
(she sits, more seriously)
...and more than that, you may be our only hope.

She looks to Sojef, who launches into their story... as the scene plays, Artim continues to serve cider to the adults...

SOJEF
We came here from a solar system on the verge of self-destruction... where technology had created weapons that could destroy all life with the touch of one button. A small group of us set off on a journey to find a new home... a home that would be isolated from the threats of other worlds. We wanted to create a new existence... or perhaps an old one...
(beat)
That was three hundred and nine years ago.

PICARD
(reacts)
You've not aged a day since then?

SOJEF
Actually, I was a good deal older when we arrived... in terms of my physical condition.

ANIJ
There's an unusual metaphasic radiation present in this planet's rings. It continuously regenerates the cells in our bodies. You must have noticed the effects by now.

PICARD
We've... just begun to.
(to Artim)
I suppose you're seventy-five.

ARTIM
No, I'm twelve.

(CONTINUED)

TOURNEL
The metaphasic radiation won't begin to affect him until he reaches maturity...

PICARD
To many offlanders, what you have here would be more valuable than gold-pressed latinum.
(beat)
And I'm afraid it's the reason that someone is trying to take this world away from you.

ARTIM
Then, the artificial lifeform was right when he tried to protect us. We were in danger.

PICARD
If not for Data, you'd probably have been re-located by now.

TOURNEL
How can we possibly defend ourselves?

SOJEF
We must not respond to this threat with violence.

ANIJ
You'd let them take everything we have?

SOJEF
The moment we pick up a weapon... we lose everything we are...

PICARD
It may not come to that.

They turn to him...

PICARD
Clearly, the architects of this conspiracy have tried to keep it a secret. Not just from you, but from my people as well.
(beat)
I don't intend to let them.

119 EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT (PREDAWN) 119

Picard and Anij stroll along the charmingly dim and deserted main street...

ANIJ
We've always known that to survive, we had to remain apart from other worlds. It hasn't been easy. Many of the young people here want to know more about the offland... they're attracted to stories of a faster pace of life...

PICARD
Most of my people who live that faster pace would sell their souls to slow it down.

ANIJ
But not you.

PICARD
(smiles)
There are days.

ANIJ
(beat, studying him)
You don't live up to your reputation as an offlander, Picard.

PICARD
(self-effacing)
In defense of offlanders, there are many more like me...

ANIJ
...who wouldn't be tempted by the promise of perpetual youth? I don't think so.

PICARD
You give me more credit than I deserve. Of course, I'm tempted. Who wouldn't be?
(beat)
But some of the blackest marks in the history of my world have involved the forced relocation of a small group of people to satisfy the desires of a larger one.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (CONT'D)
I'd like to believe we learn from our mistakes. Obviously, some of us haven't.

120 NEW ANGLE - (OPTICAL) 120*

Picard pausing to look in a corner window... beautifully hand-crafted quilts are displayed...

PICARD
The craftsmanship is extraordinary.

ANIJ
(smiles)
This is a school... that's a student's work.
(off his reaction)
She'll be ready to become an apprentice soon. Then, in thirty or forty years, she'll take her place among the artisans...

PICARD
An *apprentice* for thirty years.

ANIJ
Before we came here, there never seemed to be enough time to truly master a craft. We were caught in the rush of mortality...

PICARD
It takes one of our replicators ten seconds to create a quilt... but there's no technology I know of that can create the spark of genius.
(they continue walking)
We've noticed your people's mental discipline... even in the children's games. Did that develop here?

ANIJ
(teasing)
More questions. Always the explorer. If you stay long enough, that'll change.

PICARD
Will it?

(CONTINUED)

ANIJ
You don't even realize it's happening. Your mind slows down... stops reviewing what happened yesterday... stops planning for tomorrow... until you find...
(interrupting herself)
Let me ask *you* a question -- have you ever experienced a perfect moment in time?

PICARD
A *perfect* moment?

ANIJ
When time seemed to stop... and you could almost *live* in that moment...

PICARD
Seeing my home planet from space for the first time...

ANIJ
Yes. Exactly. Nothing more complicated than perception.
(beat)
You explore the universe. We've discovered a single moment in time can be a universe in itself... full of powerful forces... most people aren't aware enough of the *now*... to ever notice them...

PICARD
I wish I could spare a few centuries to learn.

ANIJ
It took us centuries to learn that it *doesn't have to take centuries to learn.*

They reach the doorway to her home...

PICARD
There's one thing I don't understand.
(off her look)
In three hundred years... you never learned to swim?

(CONTINUED)

ANIJ
(smiles)
I just... haven't gotten around to it yet.

She steps forward to enter, pauses...

ANIJ
I wonder if you're aware of the trust you engender, Jean-Luc Picard. In my experience, it's unusual for...

PICARD
...an offlander...?

ANIJ
(beat, smiles)
For someone so young.

Picard smiles, aware of a sexual tension... for the second time in his visit, a hummingbird flitters by, briefly examining a street lamp and then away. She moves inside, glances back and smiles. Then she's gone. Picard turns and looks at the horizon where the sun will come up soon... reacts as he sees --

121 THE SILHOUETTE OF GEORDI LA FORGE - (OPTICAL) 121

standing there, looking out at the horizon...

122 CLOSER 122

as Picard moves over...

PICARD
Geordi...?

Geordi turns and Picard reacts as he sees Geordi's *eyes*... <u>without</u> <u>the</u> <u>implants</u>... Geordi smiles...

LA FORGE
Funniest thing, Captain. There wasn't anything wrong with my implants. There was something *right* with my eyes... somehow the cells around my optic nerve...

PICARD
Regenerated.

(CONTINUED)

LA FORGE
It may not last after we leave. *
If not, I just wanted, before we go...
(beat)
I've never actually seen a sunrise.

Picard considers him a long beat... and they turn to see --

123 THE SUN - (OPTICAL) 123*

cracking the horizon turning the lake red...

124 PICARD AND GEORDI 124

bathed in the sunlight... Picard's face looking younger, contented in the new sun...

125 THE SUNRISE - VARIOUS SHOTS 125

...the silhouette of an eagle-like bird coasting a foot above the water... the morning breeze brushing the red-tinged field of tall grass...

126 GEORDI 126

A tear rolls down his cheek...

127 WIDE - (OPTICAL) 127*

as the sunlight cascades over the village and hills and if we weren't sure this place was magic before, we certainly know it now.

128 EXT. SPACE - THE FOUR SON'A SHIPS - (OPTICAL) 128

dwarf the Enterprise as they move into orbit...

129 INT. READY ROOM (OPTICAL) 129

Dougherty and Ru'afo enter... Ru'afo is furious --

RU'AFO
Am I to understand that you're not releasing my men, Captain?

Picard at his desk working, looks up...

PICARD
I was attacked by one of your officers yesterday. Just as Data was attacked when he discovered the cloaked holo-ship during your mission.

That stops Ru'afo. He looks at Dougherty who realizes some damage control will be necessary...

PICARD (CONT'D)
That attack is what caused his malfunction.

DOUGHERTY
Ru'afo, why don't you let the Captain and I...

Ru'afo's face is so tight it seems it's going to break...

RU'AFO
No!

...and it *does* -- a crack opens up from his forehead to his chin and blood dribbles out of it...

RU'AFO (CONT'D)
This entire mission has been one Federation blunder after another. You will return my men or this alliance will end with the destruction of your ship.

He exits. A beat as Dougherty measures Picard, then grants that his conclusions are accurate...

DOUGHERTY
His people were ordered not to reveal the holo-ship to the Starfleet crew under any circumstances. Obviously, they overreacted.

Picard says nothing, forces Dougherty to keep talking.

DOUGHERTY
You're looking well, Jean-Luc. Rested.

PICARD
Your "Briar Patch" turned out to be more hospitable than I expected.

DOUGHERTY
(nods)
That's why we put chromodynamic shields in place - so our people wouldn't feel the effects from the metaphasic radiation...

PICARD
...or understand that they were participating in the outright *theft* of a world.
(beat)
I won't let you move them, Admiral. I'll go to the Federation Council...

DOUGHERTY
I'm acting on *orders* from the Federation Council.

PICARD
(reacts, beat)
How can there be an order to *abandon* the Prime Directive...?

DOUGHERTY
The Prime Directive doesn't apply. These people are not indigenous to this world. They were never meant to be immortal. Once we move them to a normal environment, we'll simply be restoring their natural evolution.

PICARD
That... is remarkable logic, Admiral.

DOUGHERTY
(irritated)
I'm not used to hearing sarcasm from Captains. Perhaps you've been here too long...

PICARD
Who are we to decide the next course of evolution for these people?

DOUGHERTY
There are *six hundred* people down there. We'll be able to use the regenerative properties of this radiation to help *billions*.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DOUGHERTY (CONT'D)
(beat)
The Son'a have developed a procedure to collect the metaphasic particles [TECH] from the planet's rings... they've been working on this for decades, it's incredibly sophisticated. Since this system is in Federation space, they've agreed to share everything they get fifty-fifty with us. Life spans will be doubled, Jean-Luc... an entire new medical science will evolve...

A beat as Picard reacts to this new information... Dougherty pursues his argument with confidence...

DOUGHERTY
I understand your Chief Engineer has the use of his eyes for the first time in his life... would you take his sight away from him?

PICARD
(beat)
Must we interfere with the planet's ecosystem? Aren't there metaphasic particles [TECH] throughout The Briar Patch?

DOUGHERTY
The high concentration in the rings is what makes the whole damned thing work. Don't ask me to explain it to you; I can't. I only know they inject something into the rings that starts a [TECH] reaction. After it's over, the planet will be unlivable for generations.

PICARD
Delay the procedure. Let my people look at the technology.

DOUGHERTY
Our best scientific minds already have. They can't begin to offer an alternative. And in their present condition the Son'a can't afford to wait any longer.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
They could establish a separate colony on the planet...

DOUGHERTY
It would take ten years of normal exposure to begin to reverse their condition. Some of them won't survive that long. Besides, they don't want to live in the middle of The Briar Patch... who would?

PICARD
The Ba'ku.

Picard and Dougherty look at each other a long beat.

PICARD
There's no way to predict the consequences if we move them to a new environment. My doctor tells me there have been changes in their DNA due to centuries of metaphasic exposure...

DOUGHERTY
If necessary, we can build bio-domes for them to live in... recreate the environment in a contained atmosphere.

Considering the horror of this plan --

PICARD
Bio-domes.

A long beat.

PICARD
(calm and direct)
Admiral, we are betraying the principles *upon* which the Federation was *founded*... this is an attack on the very *soul* of the Federation.
(beat)
This will destroy the Ba'ku. Just as cultures have been destroyed in every other forced relocation throughout history. An entire race of people.

DOUGHERTY
Six hundred people, Jean-Luc.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
(beat)
How many people would it take... before it becomes wrong? A thousand? Fifty thousand. A million? *

Dougherty has taken this as far as he intends to.

DOUGHERTY
I'm ordering you to the Goren system. File whatever protests you wish to. By the time you do, this will all be done.
(moves to exit)
I'm also ordering the release of the Son'a officers.

He's out. Picard sits at his desk for a long beat...

130 INT. BRIDGE 130

Worf at Conn, Data at Ops, Riker at command... they look up at Picard as he comes out of the Ready Room.

PICARD
Prepare the ship for departure at oh-seven-hundred hours.

RIKER
Aye, sir.

Data exchanges a curious glance with Riker as Picard crosses to the turbolift. Before he gets in, he turns and looks at his bridge, imprinting it on his mind.

131 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS 131*

as he enters, stands in the middle of the room a long beat, his table still cluttered with charts and PADDS...

132 ANGLE - CLOSEUP - HIS DRESSER 132

One pip is placed on top, a second, third and fourth...

133 INT. SON'A BODY SCULPTURE CHAMBER - CLOSE ON A TOOTH (OPTICAL) 133 *

as it's implanted into a very old man's mouth and now, the old fellow has a mouthful of bright new teeth...

(CONTINUED)

near-by, an alien liposuction device drains fluid from one man's body, his contour changing before our eyes. Gallatin enters, moving to --

134 RU'AFO - (OPTICAL) 134

sitting, his head locked in position by an apparatus... a female attendant actually giving him a facelift in front of our eyes... the device stretching his face ever tighter, as she snips off skin by one ear with a laser in a bloodless surgery that heals his wound...

RU'AFO
Gallatin! So the righteous Starfleet Captain finally released you. Did you encounter any problems on the surface?

GALLATIN
(acknowledges)
Nosir. But it wasn't easy... being among them...

RU'AFO
I'm sure. Just don't forget what they did to us.
(Gallatin nods)
We'll have them rounded up in a day or two... we needn't bother with the Federation's holo-ship any more. Just get the holding cells ready.

Gallatin acknowledges, leaves. To the attendant --

RU'AFO
I'm going to miss these little flesh-stretching sessions of ours, my dear.

As she pulls up his other ear...

135 INT. YACHT COCKPIT - (OPTICAL) 135*

Picard, out of uniform, works a transporter and cases of military supplies MATERIALIZE on a loading platform that will lower into the cargo hold of the yacht... he studies a translucent geology scan of the surface that we will hear more about later... *

(CONTINUED)

DATA (O.C.)
Re-routing the transport grid to avoid detection was wise, sir, but the transporter is rarely used after oh-two hundred hours.

Picard turns to see Data, Troi, Crusher, La Forge, Worf and Riker have entered the hatch. All but Riker and Geordi are out of uniform.

RIKER
Taking the Captain's yacht out for a spin?
(moving to the cargo)
With seven metric tons of ultritium explosives, eight tetryon pulse launchers, ten isomagnetic disintegrators...
(beat)
You must be planning on doing some hunting.

PICARD
I want you all... to go back to your quarters... immediately.
(no one moves)
I will not allow you... to throw away your careers. This is not about loyalty to me...

TROI
No, it's about loyalty to the ideals of the Federation...

WORF
The ideals you've taught us to fight for...

Geordi, with his normal eyes, moves forward...

LA FORGE
How could I look at another sunrise, knowing what my sight cost these people, Captain?

Picard looks at them with appreciation.

DATA
Excuse me, but I feel obliged to point out that the environmental anomalies may be stimulating certain rebellious instincts common to youth that could affect everyone's judgment. Except mine, of course.

CRUSHER
Okay, Data, what do you think we should do?

Data looks to everyone, considering a beat... picks up a phaser rifle... activates it...

DATA
Saddle up. Lock and load.

The family united looks to their Captain for instructions. Picard looks to them with deep affection.

PICARD
They won't detonate the gravitic charges while the planet is inhabited. So, our job is to keep the planet inhabited.

He looks at Riker and La Forge, knowing that his first officer and chief engineer must stay with the ship.

PICARD (CONT'D)
Go back and put a face on what's happening here. Make the Council see the Ba'ku. It's too easy to turn a blind eye to the suffering of an unfamiliar people. We'll hold out as long as we can...

Riker and La Forge acknowledge. Picard takes an extra moment to look, perhaps for the last time, into the eyes of his first officer with affection...

PICARD
There's a short letter I left you all, just some... sentimental blather... the computer will bring it to your attention at oh-four-hundred... I'd just as soon you delete it...

RIKER
Fat chance. I'll post it on every monitor on the ship...

Picard grins with nice embarrassment, hits a panel and the weapons sink into the yacht... as the non-uniformed officers move to take their posts, Riker takes Troi in his arms...

RIKER
Take care of yourself... Imzadi. I'll be back for you.

As he kisses her good-bye, the others react in surprise.

DATA
Apparently the environmental anomalies are also stimulating...

Worf shuts him up with a hard look... Data gets the message, sits in a cockpit chair and quietly begins to work...

136 EXT. SPACE - THE YACHT - (OPTICAL) 136

falls away from the belly of the mother ship... and after a beat, the thrusters ignite and off they go...

137 INT. SON'A SHIP BRIDGE 137

Ru'afo enters, concerned, looks to Gallatin for a report.

GALLATIN
As the Enterprise left orbit, one of their support craft went down to the surface.
(hands him a PADD)
It appeared to be the Captain's Yacht. Five persons on board.

RU'AFO
(beat, off PADD)
We're not waiting until morning... take the shuttles and get everyone off the surface tonight.

138 EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT - (OPTICAL) 138

On a door opening... as we hear a bell ringing... the face of Artim fills the screen... his eyes scared... he sees Tournel pulling on the warning bell in the square... all around him people are talking... moving with urgency... overlapping dialogue... slowly revealing from his POV that there are literally <u>hundreds</u> of people moving about...

VARIOUS BA'KU
(ad lib)
What is it? What's going on? What's happened? Is something wrong?

(CONTINUED)

TOURNEL
We're leaving the village... take only what you need. Bring food... we may not be back for days...

As we continue to follow Artim, we see people packing supplies onto the backs of llamas... and now Artim sees the Captain's yacht which has landed and he's never seen a spaceship before... he moves over and examines it with awe... jumps with a start as a slim, high-tech device on a stake suddenly lights up like a Christmas tree near-by him... he retreats, bumping into Data who is just coming out of the yacht hatch... Data sees his reaction...

DATA
It is a transport inhibitor. Until we get into the mountains, these will prevent Son'a ships from beaming anyone off the surface...

Artim, overwhelmed and still scared of the android, backs away from Data without responding and moves quickly around the ship... past Worf and Troi pulling weapons and supplies out of the cargo hold, reacts to the alien sight of Worf... they make brief eye contact as Artim continues on the move to see Picard going over the translucent geo-scans we saw on the yacht with Anij and Sojef...

PICARD
...these are the veins of kelbonite running through the hills... the more concentrated the deposits the more trouble they'll have with their transporters... I've planned a route that will keep us as close to these deposits as possible...

Artim moves beside his father, holds onto him...

PICARD (CONT'D)
When we're forced away by the terrain, we'll use transport inhibitors to compensate... but our goal is to reach this area in the mountains with the highest concentration of kelbonite. Once we're there, transport will be virtually impossible...

SOJEF
We could spread out across the mountains and hide for days...

(CONTINUED)

ANIJ
They'd have to send down foot soldiers to root us out one by one...

PICARD
(acknowledges)
We can hold them off a long time... *once we get there...*
(beat)
But they will not make it easy to get there...

Worf and Data move over...

DATA
Captain, I've activated transport inhibitors around the village...

PICARD
Good. Let's begin to move these people out...

WORF
Should I distribute phasers to the Ba'ku, sir...?

PICARD
No. We'll be responsible for that, Mister Worf.

They all react to the sound of thrusters flying overhead... they look up to see --

139 P.O.V. - THE NIGHT SKY - (OPTICAL) 139

as Son'a shuttlecraft roar overhead...

140 INT. SON'A SHUTTLE - NIGHT 140

SON'A OFFICER #1
Transporters are not functioning.

GALLATIN
(off sensors)
They're blocking the beams with some kind of inhibitors. We'll have to locate and destroy them.

141 EXT. FIELD - WIDE NIGHT - (OPTICAL) 141

The mass of people cross the fields...

(CONTINUED)

the Starfleet officers separated at intervals among them, continuing to encourage and assist them forward... progress slows as they converge onto the narrow path leading into the hills...

142 ANGLE NEAR THE VILLAGE - (OPTICAL) 142

with Sojef and Artim...

SOJEF
Don't try to carry too much... we've got a long climb ahead of us...

Suddenly, the ground shakes with booms as the ships overhead fire a series of air to surface missiles parallel to the path ahead... voices raise in fear, parents grab their children, people begin to move more quickly, some drop what they're carrying...

143 ANGLE - PICARD AND ANIJ 143

at the base of the narrow path react as the explosions continue... Worf moves over...

WORF
They're going after the inhibitors.

PICARD
Draw their attention away with your pulse launcher, Mister Worf...

ANIJ
(to people moving up the path)
Move along quickly now... it'll be all right...

Worf moves away from the crowd and raises a pulse launcher to his shoulder, fires several rounds at...

144 THE NEXT PASSING SHIP - (OPTICAL) 144

one pulse connects; a fire breaks out on the ship...

145 ANOTHER SON'A SHIP - (OPTICAL) 145

fires at the surface... we see the blast knock out...

146 A TRANSPORT INHIBITOR 146

that explodes... near-by --

147 PICARD 147

reacts... to Anij --

PICARD
We've lost an inhibitor...
there's a gap in the field...

148 EXT. FIELD - WIDE (OPTICAL) 148

As another wave of ships passes over, suddenly, *with the moving sound of ships above,* people caught in the unprotected gap are swept away in a path of DEMATERIALIZATION... maybe fifty are just scooped away from the crowd... and now people are really panicking, screaming, cries, pushing forward... some scatter...

149 ARTIM - (OPTICAL) 149

being pushed, trying to hang onto his father... but more ships pass over followed by another wave of DEMATERIALIZATIONS in the same gap and suddenly Sojef is beamed away...

ARTIM
My father!

His voice is lost in the cries of the scared people who surge even harder forward toward the protection of the next inhibitor and now the boy is thrust to the ground. As he falls, the little palm-pet slips out of his pocket... Artim desperately tries to save him from being stepped on, finally snatches him in his hand. But now the crush of people threatens to trample the boy and it's a reminder how scary it can be to be small. Suddenly, an arm reaches down and scoops him up... and as we follow Artim up, we can see it's Data who has rescued him... their eyes connect briefly as Data carries him forward... in the pushing crowd...

150 ANGLE - PICARD - (OPTICAL) 150

PICARD
Move ahead calmly... stay in the protected areas... we'll be safe when we get to the hills...

(CONTINUED)

The people file ahead up the path...

151 INT. SON'A TACTICAL ROOM - (OPTICAL) 151

Dougherty, Gallatin and Ru'afo study a model of the Ba'ku foothills. Gallatin uses a laser to point to Picard's position... Dougherty is angry and embarrassed...

GALLATIN
They're following the kelbonite deposits... using the interference to block our transporters...

RU'AFO
Recommendations?

DOUGHERTY
Take me down. Let me talk to Picard.

RU'AFO
Talk... we should send down an assault team and take them by force.

DOUGHERTY
That is *not* an acceptable option. if people get hurt, all the support we have in the Federation...

RU'AFO
Federation support, Federation procedures, Federation rules... look in the mirror, Admiral... the Federation is *old*... in the last twenty four months, it's been challenged by every major power in the quadrant -- the Borg, the Cardassians, the Dominion... they all smell the scent of death on the Federation. That's why you've embraced our offer... because it will give your dear Federation new *life*. Well, how badly do you want it, Admiral? Because there are hard choices to be made now.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RU'AFO (CONT'D)
If the Enterprise gets through with news about their brave Captain's valiant struggle on behalf of the defenseless Ba'ku, your Federation politicians will waver, your Federation opinion polls will open a public debate, your Federation allies will want their say... need I go on?

Dougherty takes a deep breath... knows Ru'afo is right. Gallatin hates the idea of a violent assault, gives Dougherty the other option he's desperately seeking --

GALLATIN
There is an alternative to an all-out assault. Isolinear tags would allow our transporters to lock on to them...

RU'AFO
We'd have to tag every one of them... that would take time... and we don't have it. The Enterprise is only nineteen hours from communications range with the Federation...

DOUGHERTY
I'll order Riker to turn around.

RU'AFO
Picard's first officer. Do you really believe he'll listen?

Ru'afo's clearly lost faith in the Admiral's ability to control the situation... Dougherty's jaw tightens...

RU'AFO
My ships are capable of intercepting the Enterprise before it reaches the perimeter. I could send them to... escort... it back... but Commander Riker might not want to come...

And we slowly push into Dougherty as he steps across his self-imposed moral line...

DOUGHERTY
Send your ships.

Dougherty tries to digest the knot in his stomach...

152 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - DAWN (MATTE/OPTICAL) 152

Deep into the foothills now... much steeper terrain... feeling the power of the mountains near-by... seeing the path below as hundreds of Ba'ku and dozens of llamas wind their way up... it's almost biblical in scope with Picard and Moses leading the way...

153 ANGLE WITH DATA AND ARTIM - (OPTICAL) 153

They've been walking silently for some time... Artim struggling inside to reconcile what he's been taught about machines and the experience he's had with Data...

ARTIM
My father told me I shouldn't talk to you.

DATA
I understand.

ARTIM
I don't.

They exchange a glance. Artim sighs, troubled.

ARTIM
Not everyone here agrees with him. I mean, you know, about machines. There was even a big fight about it once.
(beat)
Do you like being a machine?

DATA
(considering)
I aspire to be more than I am.

ARTIM
I know why.
(off Data's look)
So people like us won't be afraid of you any more.

DATA
(a beat)
Perhaps, that is true.

The boy is obviously tired from miles of walking uphill...

ARTIM
Don't you ever get tired?

(CONTINUED)

DATA
My power cells continually re-charge themselves.

ARTIM
I can't imagine what it would be like to be a machine.

Data studies him... (and it should be noted that his responses are a deliberate attempt to enlighten Artim, give the child a new perspective on what it means to be an android.)

DATA
Then you and I have something in common.

ARTIM
We do?

DATA
I have often tried to imagine what it would be like to be a child...

ARTIM
Really?

DATA
Really.

ARTIM
(with fatigue)
For one thing, your legs are shorter than everyone else's.

DATA
But they are in a constant state of growth. Do you find it difficult to adapt?

ARTIM
Adapt?

DATA
A child's specifications are never the same from one moment to the next. I am surprised that you do not... trip over your own feet.

ARTIM
Sometimes I do.

DATA
My legs are eighty-seven-point-two centimeters. They were eighty-seven-point-two centimeters the day I was created. They will be eighty-seven-point-two centimeters the day I go off-line. My operation depends on specifications that do not change.
(beat)
I will never know the experience of growing up or even tripping over my own feet...

Artim is seeing the artificial lifeform in a whole new light now, which is exactly what Data intended...

ARTIM
But you've never had adults telling you what to do all the time... or bedtimes... or having to eat food you don't like...

DATA
I would gladly accept the requirement of a bedtime in exchange for knowing what it is like to be a child.

ARTIM
(considering)
Do machines ever play?

DATA
I play the violin... and my chess routines are quite advanced...

ARTIM
No, I mean...

He tries to find a way to explain, gets an idea -- pokes him with a finger...

ARTIM
You're it.

And he starts to run away...

DATA
I'm what?

Artim frowns, stops...

ARTIM
Chase me!

DATA
For what purpose?

ARTIM
Because you're *it*. And if you tag me... then I'm it.

DATA
But I can run much faster than you... I am capable of exceeding forty-seven meters per second...

ARTIM
(sighs, walking back)
Data... haven't you ever just played... for fun?

DATA
Androids... don't have... *fun*.

ARTIM
Why not...?

DATA
(beat)
No one's ever asked me that before.

ARTIM
If you want to know 'what it's like to be a child', you need to learn how to play...

As Data considers...

154 WITH PICARD AND ANIJ 154

at point... walking up a part of the trail protected by towering rocks. Worf approaches from the rear... (Note: we may notice more physical changes in our people because of the regenerative process. For example, Picard's hair is darker and there actually seems to be a touch more of it growing than before... Worf's hair is more straggly, unkempt...)

PICARD
(not serious)
You need a haircut, Commander.

(CONTINUED)

WORF
Accelerated hair growth is often experienced by Klingons during Jak'tahla...

ANIJ
Jak'tahla?

PICARD
Roughly translated: puberty... although for a Klingon that's not doing it justice; it's quite a tumultuous experience...
(to Worf)
Any severe mood swings, unusual aggressive tendencies -- be sure to let me know right away...

WORF
The Ba'ku could use some rest, sir. According to the geo-scan, this may be the safest area for the next few kilometers...

PICARD
Very well. We'll take an hour. Break out some rations...

Worf acknowledges, signals and the column lumbers to a halt... people sit along the trail...

155 AROUND THE BEND - (OPTICAL/MATTE) 155

A spectacular view of the mountains ahead... Picard and Anij move forward through some brush, lay on their stomachs as Picard uses 24th century field glasses to examine the path ahead...

ANIJ
Once we cross that ridge, we can break up into smaller groups... there are caves throughout the mountains to hide in...

PICARD
By now the Son'a have scanned the area and know that just as well as we do.

She studies him as he continues to survey the territory

(CONTINUED)

they must still cross... on a whim, she reaches out and runs a finger across his bald head... he looks up, surprised...

ANIJ
I like it. I'd miss it if all your hair grew in.

PICARD
(smiles)
You know what? So would I.

ANIJ
(smiles)
It's been three hundred years since I've seen a bald man.

PICARD
How is it a woman like you never married? And don't tell me you "just haven't gotten around to it yet"...

ANIJ
What's the rush?

PICARD
(beat)
I should warn you... I've always been attracted to older women...

She looks seriously at him and they feel the sexual tension... she takes his hand in hers, guides both hands to touch his cheek...

156 PICARD'S SUBJECTIVE POV - (OPTICAL) 156

...and in that moment, his perception and our view begin to move down her arm... and we enter...

157 AN ALTERED REALITY - (OPTICAL) 157

Picard, and we, find ourselves in a heightened state of sensory perception -- time seems to be slowing down to a crawl, sounds are sharper... we hear Picard's heart beating slowly, his breath uncertain... her eyes blink slowly with a booming percussion... he follows her gaze to see yet another hummingbird, *hears* its languid wing motion... swirling dust from the mountain seems like a rippling scarf in a breeze that plays in his ears like a natural flute... his breath becomes more even as he relaxes into this altered state and he feels...

158 HER FINGERS 158

gently touching the hair at the top of his chest, sensing, even hearing, her fingertips against his flesh.

159 HER LIPS 159

brush his cheek, his lips... her teeth nip gently on his lower lip, tugging it and then her lips press against his for an eternity...

160 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 160

Moving at one-third impulse through The Briar Patch...

161 INT. BRIDGE 161

Riker at Command, Perim at Conn, La Forge at Ops, Nara at Tactical, supernumeraries...

PERIM
Commander, I'm showing two Son'a ships on an intercept course.

RIKER
Bearing?

PERIM
Two one four mark three one... moving a lot faster than we are.

RIKER
Time to intercept?

PERIM
Eighteen minutes....

LA FORGE
We're not going to be able to get a transmission out of here for at least another hour...

NARA
They're hailing us. *

RIKER
Tell them our transceiver assembly is down, that we can send messages but can't receive them.

(CONTINUED)

Nara sends the message... a beat...

NARA
I don't think they believe us.

RIKER
Why not?

Boom... a small explosion well off target... the ship shakes gently...

RIKER
(off sensors)
A photon torpedo.
(dry)
Isn't that the universal greeting when communications are down? *

LA FORGE
I think it's the universal greeting when you don't like someone. *

Another boom shakes them slightly...

RIKER
Full impulse.

LA FORGE
The manifolds can't handle full impulse in The Patch, Commander.

RIKER
If we don't outrun them, the manifolds are going to be the only thing left of this ship.

LA FORGE
(nods)
I'll be in Engineering.

La Forge exits. A supernumerary quickly replaces him.

RIKER
All hands. Battle stations!

162 EXT. TRAIL - DAY 162*

Troi and Beverly are sitting. As Data comes over and delivers Starfleet rations... mid-conversation... *

TROI
And have you noticed how your boobs have started to firm up?

(CONTINUED)

CRUSHER
(dry)
Not that we care about such things.

TROI
Uh huh.

Data glances at their breasts as he hands them plates...

CRUSHER
Thank you, Data.

We stay with him as he takes the tray to Worf who looks at the plate with disdain...

WORF
I have an odd craving for the blood of a live Kolar beast.
(off Data's look)
The environment must be affecting me again. *

DATA
(agreeing)
And have you noticed how your boobs have started to firm up?
(Worf reacts)
Not that we care about such things.

Suddenly, the distant sound of approaching thrusters...

163 ANGLE - A DOZEN SON'A SHUTTLES (OPTICAL) 163

coming over the horizon...

WORF
(hits combadge)
Take cover!

164 PICARD AND ANIJ 164

moving back toward the others... look up to see -- *

165 SON'A SHUTTLES - (OPTICAL) 165

overhead, dropping dozens of...

166 FLYING DRONES - (OPTICAL) 166

the size of footballs with parts rotating, blinking,

(CONTINUED)

scanning...

167 EXT. DRONE POV - FLYING ABOVE THE TRAIL - (OPTICAL) 167

The Ba'ku scattering as drones fly over them...

168 DATA AND ARTIM - (OPTICAL) 168

react, Data firing at the drones as Artim crawls behind a rock...

169 PICARD AND WORF - (OPTICAL) 169

open fire with phasers destroying two, but the third fires a new kind of weapon hitting --

170 CLOSE ON A BA'KU WOMAN'S BACK 170

as it's *tagged* with a tiny device fired from the drone...

171 ANGLE - THE BA'KU WOMAN - (OPTICAL) 171

DEMATERIALIZES... a fraction of a beat later, Picard blasts the drone... more people DEMATERIALIZE as the drone attack continues...

WORF
They're firing isolinear tags for their transporters to lock on to.

PICARD
We're sitting ducks out here... we have to find some shelter...

ANIJ
There's a cavern at the base of the next hill...

PICARD
(signaling to the others)
This way!

172-175 VARIOUS - (OPTICAL) 172-175

on our principals providing covering fire as the Ba'ku move quickly ahead... more drones fly in, firing their tags, more Ba'ku are hit and DEMATERIALIZE... our people fire repeated bursts destroying several of them...

176 WITH DATA AND ARTIM - (OPTICAL) 176

DATA
A dangerous variation on your game of 'tag', Artim. Hurry... we most definitely do not want to be 'it'...

He blasts a drone as they push ahead...

177 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 177

exchanging fire with the two Son'a ships in pursuit, a trail of hot exhaust coming from the Enterprise...

178 INT. BRIDGE 178

Seriously damaged... plasma leaks, smoke...

NARA
Shields at sixty percent...

PERIM
Atmospheric decompression, deck six, sections four through ten!

RIKER
Begin an evacuation!

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE
Engineering to Bridge. We're burning deuterium down here...

179 INT. ENGINEERING 179

Impulse engines smoking... engineers spray coolant foam over them to keep the temperatures from red-lining...

LA FORGE
We're going to blow *ourselves* up... we won't need any help from the Son'a...

180 INT. BRIDGE INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN - (OPTICAL) 180

A huge nebula cluster up ahead...

RIKER
What's inside that nebula cluster?

(CONTINUED)

PERIM
Cometary debris, planetesimals, pockets of unstable metreon gas... we don't want to go in there, sir...

RIKER
Yes, we do.
(pats her shoulder)
You're relieved, Ensign. Take over at Ops.

He takes the Conn... Perin replaces the officer at Ops...

RIKER
Time to use "The Briar Patch" like B'rer Rabbit did...

181 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 181

making a hard turn and disappearing into the cluster...

182 EXT. PLANET SURFACE/TRAIL - (OPTICAL) 182

The Ba'ku run for their lives toward the mouth of a cavern, steam coming up from the hot mineral waters within it...

PICARD
Into the cavern! Move!

And our people continue to blast the swarming drones above but there are so many of them... several Ba'ku are tagged and DISAPPEAR...

183 WITH WORF 183

as his phaser jams and he picks up a thin tree trunk and with Klingon howls, swings it like a bat'leth at the drones... missing one but then connecting with another and a second one knocking them out of the park like Hank Aaron... glancing to Picard...

WORF
Sir, I am definitely feeling aggressive tendencies...

184 ANGLE WITH DATA AND ARTIM - (OPTICAL) 184

surrounded by Ba'ku as they move quickly along a very steep trail, Data firing at drones as they go...

(CONTINUED)

suddenly just in front of them, a Son'a assault team appears over the ridge... three armed foot soldiers ready to take prisoners... Data lunges, like a running back hitting a defensive line and his power throws them back and they fall...

185 OFF THE CLIFF - (OPTICAL) 185

the long terrible fall beginning...

186 DATA - (OPTICAL) 186

thinks fast, snatches a passing drone out of the air and aims it at...

187 THE THREE FALLING SON'A - (OPTICAL) 187

and as they're *tagged*, they DEMATERIALIZE in free-fall.

188 DATA 188

looks down, satisfied, then crushes the drone with his bare hands and provides more cover fire as the Ba'ku move quickly to the cavern...

189 EXT. NEBULA - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 189

Flying through dark matter clouds and stellar debris which light up as Son'a torpedos explode all around them... suddenly there is a different kind of blast off the Enterprise's stern -- a bright implosion, sucking up everything around it, literally ripping subspace apart as it cascades toward the ship...

190 INT. BRIDGE 190

Terribly rough ride...

NARA
Sir, they've detonated an isolytic burst... a subspace tear is forming...

RIKER
On screen.

191 ANGLE TO INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN - (OPTICAL) 191

As Riker sees the tear coming at them...

PERIM
I thought subspace weapons were banned by the Khitomer Accord...

RIKER
Remind me to lodge a protest...

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE
Commander, our warp core is acting like a magnet to the tear.

192 INT. ENGINEERING 192*

Geordi on the move to a new control panel...

LA FORGE (CONT'D)
We're pulling it like a zipper across space...

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Options?

LA FORGE
Eject the core.

INTERCUT:

193 INT. BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 193

As the viewscreen shows the tear getting closer...

RIKER
Will that stop the tear?

LA FORGE
You got me, Commander.

RIKER
That's your expert opinion?

LA FORGE
Detonating the warp core might neutralize the cascade... but then again it might not. Subspace weapons are unpredictable. That's why they were banned.

(CONTINUED)

NARA
The tear is closing on us... impact in fifteen seconds... *

RIKER
Eject the core.

LA FORGE
I just did.

NARA
Impact in ten seconds...

RIKER
Detonate!

194 INT. ENGINEERING - GEORDI 194

presses the panels to detonate and...

195 EXT. NEBULA - THE SUBSPACE TEAR (OPTICAL) 195

rips toward the Enterprise as the ejected warp core explodes. The subspace disruption that follows --

196 INT. ENGINEERING 196

throws everybody down. Consoles explode...

197 INT. BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS 197

Panels are blown off, fires break out, lights fail, people thrown to the ground. As it subsides, Riker crawls back to Conn...

NARA
It worked, Commander... the tear's been sealed... * *

198 INT. ENGINEERING 198

LA FORGE
There's nothing to stop them from doing it again... and we're fresh out of warp cores...

199 INT. BRIDGE 199

PERIM
We're still thirty-six minutes from transmission range, sir.

RIKER
(nods, deciding)
We're through running from these bastards.

200 INT. HYDROTHERMAL CAVERN - DAY 200

A large, steamy, wet environment... pools of mineral water drizzle along the floor... the Ba'ku and their llamas slosh through the mud, seeking some kind of comfortable place to rest... we can still hear shooting outside the cave...

201 ANGLE - TOWARD THE ENTRANCE - (OPTICAL) 201

as the last Ba'ku enter, Picard and Worf come in, firing at drones outside as they come... Data energizes a forcefield across the mouth of the cave... and now the drones trying to come in bounce off it outside... they are forced to hover menacingly outside...

PICARD
(to Data)
How many?

DATA
Another forty-three people reported taken, sir...

Picard frowns, sighs, takes in their new surroundings... suddenly, the caverns are shaken by the sound of overhead explosions... reactions, fearful murmurs, skittish llamas...

202 ON ARTIM 202

sitting with other Ba'ku... they look up at the frightening sound... sand drifting dangerously from the ceiling...

203 CLOSE ON ARTIM'S POCKET 203

The palm-pet crawls out...

204 EXT. FOOTHILLS - CONTINUOUS (OPTICAL) 204

As the Son'a shuttles fly over firing torpedos, explosions across the terrain...

205 INT. HYDROTHERMAL CAVERN 205

As Picard et al react to the aerial assault... ground continually shuddering... Picard and Worf exchange a grim look...

WORF
They're trying to force us out so their drones can tag us...

Picard nods, agreeing.. As dust falls from the ceiling and the blasts continue to rock them... Data studies his tricorder...

DATA
With all the hydrothermal vents in the ground [TECH], the structural integrity of this cavern is not going to hold for long, Captain...

Picard glances out at a half-dozen drones hovering outside...

PICARD
Is there any other way out of here?

Anij shakes her head, grim... Data joins them...

DATA
Tracking the water flow may reveal another potential exit...

As they use tricorders to follow the water flow deeper into the cavern...

206 NEW ANGLE - NARROWER PORTION OF THE CAVE - (OPTICAL) 206

as the flow of water disappears under a wall... the air assault continues...

DATA
(off tricorder)
I'm showing fresh air [TECH BETTER] behind this calcite formation, Captain...

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
Will the structure hold if we blast through?

DATA
(examines walls with tricorder)
I believe it is safe, sir.

Using their phasers, they blast the wall away to reveal --

207 ANGLE/MATTE OUTSIDE (SECOND EXIT) (OPTICAL) 207

revealing several paths up to rocky mountains not far away, distant cave openings in view...

PICARD
Spread out as far as you can... get everyone into those caves, you should be safe there... set up forcefields once everyone's inside...

With renewed optimism, they go to gather up the Ba'ku...

208 EXT. NEBULA - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 208

coming about...

209 INT. BRIDGE - ANGLE TO INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN - (OPTICAL) 209

Riker at Conn as messed up as we've ever seen him, his face a study in determination. The bridge is barely functional. Pockets of colorful gases are visible on the screen.

RIKER
Geordi, are those pockets of metreon gas...?

210 INT. ENGINEERING 210

Off an Okudagram --

LA FORGE
Aye, sir. Highly volatile... I recommend we keep our distance...

(CONTINUED)

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Negative. I want to use the ramscoop to collect as much of it as we can...

LA FORGE
The purpose being...?

211 INT. BRIDGE 211

RIKER
The purpose being I intend to shove it down the Son'a's throat.

NARA
Commander, if one of their weapons hits that gas...

RIKER
It's our only way out of here, Mister Nara.

212 INT. ENGINEERING 212

as Geordi goes to work, nods with admiration...

LA FORGE
I wouldn't be surprised if history remembers this as the Riker Maneuver...

RIKER'S COM VOICE
If it works you mean.

LA FORGE
Even if it doesn't, they'll be teaching kids at the Academy <u>not</u> to do this for years to come.

213 EXT. NEBULA - CLOSE ON THE RAMSCOOP - (OPTICAL) 213

as it begins to sweep up the gases... compressing them into a critical mass...

214 INT. BRIDGE - INCLUDE THE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL) 214

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE
Bridge, storage cells are at maximum capacity -- five thousand cubic meters of metreon gas...

(CONTINUED)

RIKER
Computer, access manual steering column.

In an instant, a joystick pops up from the control. He grabs the stick... a computer gamester's dream...

RIKER
Transfer helm controls to manual.

The computer bleeps. As the fog clears, we can see on the screen that we're closing fast on the Son'a ships...

PERIM
They're powering their forward weapons array.

RIKER
Blow out the ramscoop. Stand by full thrusters.

LA FORGE'S COM VOICE
Ramscoop released!

Riker hits panels and the ship lurches...

215 EXT. NEBULA - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 215

turning away as the Son'a ships fire and wham, the gases erupt... the Enterprise careens away out of control as the Son'a ships are hit by the explosion's full force. Both catch seriously on fire. After a beat, one explodes into bits... the other one sits there, helplessly on fire...

216 INT. HYDROTHERMAL CAVE - (OPTICAL) 216

The aerial assault continues as people file out the new exit... sand drifting dangerously from the ceiling as the bombs shake the cavern... Data looks at a tricorder... moves to Picard. Just outside the new exit, a series of plasma blasts are fired from a nearby hill...

WORF
Up there!

He points to a small squadron of Son'a that have spotted them...

PICARD
Data, Troi... keep these people moving. Worf, with me...

(CONTINUED)

They arm themselves, Worf takes a new bazooka-like weapon, an isomagnetic disintegrator, and they move out...

217 EXT. CAVERN (SECOND EXIT) - (OPTICAL) 217

Worf and Picard provide cover as Data and Troi lead more people toward the mountains... Worf fires his disintegrator...

218 THE SON'A ASSAULT TEAM - (OPTICAL) 218

is blown back as it connects... one of the wounded falls, sliding a long way down the hill, landing near the cave...

219 CRUSHER 219

scans the unconscious Son'a with a tricorder. Her eyes react as she sees something else on the tricorder... this is impossible, she checks again.

CRUSHER
Captain...

Picard moves over cautiously...

PICARD
Will he live?

CRUSHER
Yes. But look at this medscan...

He looks at the tricorder, reacts incredulously...

PICARD
How could this be possible?

She shakes her head, looks back to the cavern entrance where Anij and Tournel are assisting the last Ba'ku out of the cave...

CRUSHER
Maybe we should ask them.

Data and Troi return to lead the last group out of the cave...

220 INT. HYDROTHERMAL CAVERN 220

Artim is among a dozen or so of the Ba'ku waiting to be

(CONTINUED)

taken... he reaches into his pocket for his palm-pet, can't find it... he reacts... he moves into the main cavern away from the others... a beat later, Anij and Tournel ready the group...

ANIJ
Is that everyone?

BA'KU WOMAN
(looking for)
The boy...

They check the immediate vicinity... no Artim...

ANIJ
Wait here.

She moves toward the main cavern...

221 WITH ARTIM 221

back in the corner where he found the rifle, finding his pet crawling slowly on the floor...

ARTIM
There you are..

ANIJ
Artim! What are you doing?

She doesn't bother waiting for an answer... just grabs him and pulls him along with her in a hurry...

222 AT THE (SECOND) ENTRANCE 222

Picard, Worf, Data, Troi and Crusher arrive...

TROI
Anij went to find Artim...

Picard moves toward the main cavern...

ANIJ (O.C.)
I've got him.

223 ANGLE - INTO THE CAVERN 223

And we see Anij and Artim maybe thirty yards away from Picard... running now... coming this way... suddenly, wham... a rocket hits the mountainside and the ground shudders... and the ceiling starts to collapse... and...

224 PICARD'S EYES 224

connect with...

225 ANIJ'S EYES 225

for an instant...

226 WIDE 226

Picard reaches out for her... just as the whole thing comes down on both of them... Picard throws Artim out of the cave just in front of the collapse into the arms of...

227 DATA 227

who pulls him safely away from the collapse... The Starfleet officers move back to examine the collapsed mouth of the cave...

DATA
(to Artim)
Tournel will take you the rest of the way...

ARTIM
No... I want to stay with you...

DATA
It is safer there. I will join you shortly.

Artim reluctantly goes and the last people cross the divide with Tournel. Overlapping the above dialogue --

WORF
(presses combadge)
Worf to Picard.

No response.

CRUSHER
(off tricorder)
Two life signs... one extremely faint...

TROI
(off tricorder)
There are almost four metric tons of rock blocking our way...

(CONTINUED)

She aims a phaser at the rocks, but Worf stops her...

WORF
That might cause another cave-in.

They have no choice... they start digging furiously... Data picking up rocks that no human could lift... Worf refusing to surrender to his own physical limitations... Beverly and Troi do the best they can... Tournel takes the last children across the divide...

228 INT. HYDROTHERMAL CAVERN 228

Almost pitch black... finding Picard under rubble, his face cut, dazed, shaking himself back to consciousness... hoarsely cries out for...

PICARD
Anij...

He gropes around for her...

WORF'S COM VOICE
Worf to Picard...

PICARD
Yes... yes, I... can hear you...

WORF'S COM VOICE
We're trying to get to you, sir...

Picard begins to crawl around in the darkness and finally comes to motionless body of Anij...

PICARD
Anij.

She barely opens her eyes... Picard looks to see if he still has his tricorder; he does... he trains it on her... the readings are not good...

PICARD
Help is coming.

She looks at him and tries to smile, but it's too much... and her eyes close... and the tricorder tells Picard she's on the edge of death...

PICARD
Worf, you must hurry...

(CONTINUED)

WORF'S COM VOICE *
We're coming as fast as we can... *
we can't risk using phasers... *

PICARD
I understand. Tell Doctor Crusher to have a hypospray of lectrazine ready...

CRUSHER'S COM VOICE
How bad is she, Captain...? *

PICARD
(beat)
I'm losing her.

CRUSHER'S COM VOICE
We're coming.

Picard takes Anij's hand and holds it to his own cheek...

PICARD
Stay with me... don't let go of this moment, Anij... help me find the power to make you live in this moment... just one more moment... and then one more after that... and one more after that.

Her eyes weakly open one last time and look at him... and as their eyes connect... once again...

229 HIS POV (OPTICAL) 229

as his consciousness moves down her arm and as the bond is formed... he experiences --

230 AN ALTERED REALTY - (OPTICAL) 230

with heightened senses again as time seems to slow down, her eyelids thumping slowly louder and louder... and as they hold the moment the cavern seems to light up with the metaphysical energy they're emanating... and it's like Picard has thrown her a mystical lifeline to hold onto... his eyes are her eyes as life seeps into them... the moment seems to last forever... she smiles gently and finally sunlight cracks into the cavern as Data and Worf break through... Crusher crawls in and uses the hypospray on Anij's neck... measures her lifesigns with the tricorder, smiles at Picard...

CRUSHER
She's stabilizing.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD
Is it safe to move her?

CRUSHER
Safer than leaving her in here.

Picard kneels and picks her up in his arms... Anij looks weakly at him...

ANIJ
And you thought it would take centuries to learn.

He smiles with affection at her... and they all exit...

231 EXT. HYDROTHERMAL CAVERN (ENTRANCE #2) - DAY 231

as Beverly, Troi, Worf, Data and Picard, carrying Anij, come out to cross the divide... and then stop dead in their tracks... as they see --

232 FIVE DRONES HOVERING - (OPTICAL) 232

menacingly between them and the safety of the mountain caverns... and as we intercut between the drones and

233 THE FACES OF OUR HEROES 233

we understand a classic showdown is imminent... an O.K. Corral moment... and this all happens very fast: our people stand shoulder to shoulder each a yard apart... Picard gently lowers Anij to the ground... Worf tosses him a spare phaser rifle... as he catches it...

234 THE DRONES - (OPTICAL) 234

open fire...

235-238 VARIOUS - (OPTICAL) 235-238

Our people react... move, duck and roll, tags just missing them, as they fire back... only Picard stands motionless on one knee protecting Anij... one, two, three, four drones are destroyed but the fifth fires, tagging Anij... Picard instantly reaches for her tag, but then he feels the sting of...

239 CLOSE - A TAG 239

on the side of his jacket; he reaches to pull it off but it's too late... *

240 PICARD AND ANIJ - (OPTICAL) 240

DEMATERIALIZE together...

241 EXT. SPACE - RU'AFO'S SHIP - (OPTICAL) 241

in orbit of the Ba'ku planet...

242 INT. SON'A BRIG - RU'AFO 242

enters a cavernous brig filled with Ba'ku, perhaps as many as eighty of them... his eyes looking for --

243 ANGLE - PICARD 243

stroking Anij's hair as she lies weakly next to him and Sojef. Picard doesn't rise to accord Ru'afo any respect.

RU'AFO
So, Captain, this time you're the one in custody. I am prepared to release you... if you order your people to surrender.

Picard just stares at Ru'afo, enraging him.

RU'AFO
You Federation officers... so ready to give your lives for a grand cause. But what about...
(re: Anij)
...her life... are you prepared to watch her die?

Dougherty enters, having heard that threat...

DOUGHERTY
There will be no prisoners harmed on board this ship.

Ru'afo has had just about as much of this Federation Admiral as he can tolerate...

(CONTINUED)

RU'AFO
This is a Son'a ship, Admiral. You'd do well to remember that. Picard has committed acts of terrorism...

DOUGHERTY
...and will be tried at a general court-martial under the rules of Starfleet directive two point seven one.

RU'AFO
More rules. How do you people get anything done?

Gallatin has entered and brings Ru'afo a PADD... Ru'afo's face drops... he hands the PADD to Dougherty...

RU'AFO
The Enterprise has destroyed one of my ships. The other is on fire, requesting assistance.

PICARD
(to Dougherty)
The Enterprise would only fire if it were defending itself. Ru'afo must have ordered an attack.
(beat)
I can't believe he would've given that order without your consent, Admiral.

Dougherty maintains eye contact but has completely lost his dignity...

PICARD
I wonder... which of us will be facing that court-martial...

DOUGHERTY
(to Ru'afo)
There's nothing further to be gained from this...

RU'AFO
You're right. This is going to end now.
(to Picard)
The Ba'ku want to stay on the planet. Let them. I'm going to launch the injector... *

Gallatin's face reacts to that... *

(CONTINUED)

Picard sees his sharp displeasure and then for an instant their eyes meet. Gallatin looks away, but Picard registers the information.

DOUGHERTY
You're not going to launch anything until...

RU'AFO
If the Federation wants no part of this, fine. Either way, in six hours, every living thing in this system will be dead or dying.

He starts to exit...

PICARD
You would kill your own people, Ru'afo? Your own parents, your brothers, sisters...
(off Dougherty's look)
Didn't you know, Admiral? The Ba'ku and the Son'a are the same race.

Dougherty, confused, looks to Ru'afo... who doesn't look back... Sojef stands and comes forward... to Ru'afo --

SOJEF
Which one were you? Gal'na... Ro'tin... Belath'nin... I'm sorry, I don't recognize you...

RU'AFO
Those names, those children are gone forever.

DOUGHERTY
What is he talking about?

SOJEF
A century ago, a group of our young people wanted to follow the ways of the offlanders. They tried to take over the colony... and when they failed...

RU'AFO
When we failed, you exiled us. To die slowly.

Anij gathers the strength to look at him...

ANIJ
You're Ro'tin, aren't you...?
There's something in the voice.
(to Gallatin)
Would you be his friend Gal'na?
(Gallatin looks away)
I helped your mother bathe you when you were a child. She still speaks of you.

PICARD
(to Dougherty)
You've brought the Federation into the middle of a blood feud, Admiral. The children have returned to expel their elders... just as they were once expelled. Except Ru'afo's need for revenge has now escalated to parricide.

Ru'afo exits. Gallatin looks at Sojef and then follows. Dougherty is a lost man, realizing his tragic errors.

DOUGHERTY
It was for the Federation. It was all for the Federation.

Picard offers no sympathy... Dougherty turns and exits...

244 INT. SON'A BODY SCULPTURE CHAMBER - (OPTICAL) 244

Deserted as Ru'afo enters, his face full of tension... he moves to a device that bombards his face with pulsating green energy, trying to relax... Dougherty enters...

DOUGHERTY
We're taking this ship out of here... this mission is over...

RU'AFO
It is not over.

DOUGHERTY
It is <u>over</u>.

Ru'afo moves away from the device and grabs Dougherty roughly... moving him across the room...

RU'AFO
I do not take orders from you.

(CONTINUED)

DOUGHERTY
If you begin that [TECH] reaction, the Federation will pursue you until...

Ru'afo, more powerful than Dougherty, throws him down into one of the treatment chairs...

RU'AFO
The *Federation...*

He locks Dougherty's head into the device... switches several panels... the device lights up ominously...

RU'AFO (CONT'D)
...will never know what happened here.

He hits a switch and begins to raise Dougherty's ears in the facelift procedure we saw before... Dougherty struggles but Ru'afo holds him down... as the Admiral's face twists and morphs into a grotesque facelift that finally strangles him to death.

245 INT. SON'A BRIDGE 245

Ru'afo enters... Gallatin and officers on duty...

RU'AFO
Admiral Dougherty will not be joining us for dinner. Deploy the collector.
(Gallatin hesitates)
Do you have a problem with those orders?

GALLATIN
May I talk to you alone?

RU'AFO
(to another officer)
Deploy the collector.

The officer complies.

GALLATIN
Moving them is one thing. Killing them all...

RU'AFO
No one hated them more than you, Gal'na.
(beat, intimately)
We've come a long way together.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RU'AFO (CONT'D)
This is the moment we've planned for so many years...

Gallatin looks at his friend, his commander... Ru'afo pats him encouragingly on the shoulder...

RU'AFO
Separate the Starfleet personnel and secure them in the aft cargo hold... see that Picard joins them...

GALLATIN
The shields in that section won't protect them against the [TECH] reaction...

RU'AFO
Thank-you for reminding me.

He sits in his command seat and watches his viewscreen...

246 ANGLE INCLUDE SCREEN - THE SON'A SCIENCE VESSEL - (OPTICAL) 246

as huge hatches open and the particle collector that will capture the metaphasic radiation from the rings slowly extends out in both directions. After a beat, Gallatin exits... push in to Ru'afo...

247 INT. VESSEL - (OPTICAL) 247

an Astrodome-sized chamber full of weird crisscrossing patterns of pipes, conduits, cables, and rails -- all of them stretching slowing outward as the collector expands.

248 EXT. SPACE - BRILLIANT SOLAR SAILS 248

begin to unfurl majestically in front of the planet's rings... and now we recognize it as the remarkable device we saw earlier in Ru'afo's simulation.

249 INT. SON'A BRIG - (OPTICAL) 249

Picard has climbed the rear wall with help from two Ba'ku, examines the forcefield generators in the ceiling.

ANIJ
(a warning)
Jean-Luc...

(CONTINUED)

He drops down as Gallatin arrives... armed with a hand weapon. Aiming it at Picard, he turns off the forcefield...

GALLATIN
Come with me.

Picard measures him for a moment then comes out, smiles 'don't worry' to Anij... Gallatin restores the field and motions for Picard to exit...

250 INT. SON'A CORRIDOR 250

PICARD
Where are we going?

Gallatin doesn't respond... they reach a turbolift... he presses a panel, they wait...

PICARD
I suppose he doesn't want to leave behind any Federation witnesses. Understandable.

The door opens and Gallatin motions to him to enter...

251 INT. TURBOLIFT - CONTINUOUS 251

GALLATIN
Deck three.

The doors close. A beat. Unusually cordial considering the circumstances --

PICARD
It must have been very strange for you.
(off his look)
When you were a hostage. Being among the friends and families you knew so many years ago. All of them looking exactly as they did. Almost like... looking through the eyes of childhood again.

Picard knows his man, fixes his eyes on him, evenly...

PICARD
And here you are trying to *close those eyes* again... to pretend you can't see what the bitterness has done to your people...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (CONT'D)
what it's done to Ru'afo... and to you.
(beat)
It's turned you... into a coward.
(off his reaction)
A man who ignores his conscience.

The door opens.

GALLATIN
Get out.

Picard doesn't move. Cool and even --

PICARD
A coward... without the moral courage to stop an unspeakable atrocity. I am *offended* to be in the presence of someone like you...

GALLATIN
(incredulous)
Is this how a Federation officer begs for his life?

PICARD
I'm not begging for my life. I'm begging for yours.
(beat)
There is still a way home, Gal'na.

Gallatin looks at Picard a long, miserable beat, then...

GALLATIN
Computer, close turbolift doors.

The doors close. Gallatin lowers his weapon.

GALLATIN
What you're asking me to do... is impossible... the crew is loyal to Ru'afo...

PICARD
Do you know how to disable the injector?

GALLATIN
(nods)
But I would need at least three minutes on the bridge.

PICARD
So, if we could lure him away from the bridge somehow...

GALLATIN
(shaking his head)
It doesn't matter where he is. As soon as he realizes something is happening, he'll override my commands with one word to his com-link...

PICARD
(beat, an idea)
What if he *doesn't* realize something's happening...
(Gallatin reacts, confused)
I need to communicate with Data on the surface.

Off Gallatin's reaction...

252 EXT. SPACE - THE COLLECTOR - (OPTICAL) 252

sails fully extended now...

253 INT. SON'A BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 253

Seeing the solar collector on the viewscreen...

RU'AFO
Initiate launch sequence.

SON'A OFFICER #2
Activating injector assembly.

SON'A OFFICER #3
Launch in [TECH] minutes.

Establish a digital display near Ru'afo's command post that shows 7:00 counting down. Ru'afo is calm, determined. Suddenly a tiny boom. Reactions.

SON'A OFFICER #3
A small craft is coming up from the surface. It's firing tachyon bursts at us...

RU'AFO
On screen.

On the screen, the Captain's yacht approaches, firing...

(CONTINUED)

SON'A OFFICER #3
One person aboard. It's the android.

Ru'afo dismisses the puny attack...

RU'AFO
He's no threat.

254 EXT. SPACE - THE YACHT - (OPTICAL) 254

firing at the Son'a ship... the solar collector continuing to power up in the background...

255 INT. YACHT COCKPIT 255

Data is alone... presses the companel...

DATA
Data to Picard...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Yes, Data...

256 INT. SON'A SHIP ELECTRICAL CONDUIT - PICARD 256

crawling through the narrow passage behind Gallatin...

DATA'S COM VOICE
Sir, they're ignoring my attack.

PICARD
Keep firing tachyon bursts into their shield grid. Is Worf in position...?

257 INT. YACHT - (OPTICAL) 257

DATA
Yessir. He's ready for simultaneous transport.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
We'll be at the bridge in two minutes... Picard out...

Data moves the ship into an attack posture, diving at the larger vessel seen in the window...

258 EXT. SPACE - THE YACHT - (OPTICAL) 258

strafing the Son'a ship with tachyon bursts...

259 INT. SON'A BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 259

The collector on the viewscreen...

SON'A OFFICER #3
Detonation in three minutes.

SON'A OFFICER #2
Sir, the Federation ship is creating a disruption in our shields... if they go out of phase, it will increase our exposure to the [TECH] reaction...

RU'AFO
(beat, irritated)
Very well. Destroy that ship and reset our shield harmonics... do not delay the countdown...

260 EXT. SPACE - THE YACHT - (OPTICAL) 260

is hit by a concentrated burst of fire from the Son'a ship... it goes spinning out of control...

261 INT. YACHT 261

Data tries to control the yacht. He's hit again...

DATA
(off console)
Data to Picard. They are rotating the shield harmonics.

His whole console is smoking... a last ditch transmission...

DATA
I am attempting to return to the planet...

262 INT. SON'A BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 262

SON'A OFFICER #3
The Federation ship has been disabled.

SON'A OFFICER #2
Launch in thirty seconds.

Suddenly, there is an extended optical flash (note: long enough to cover a brief transporter effect). Reactions.

RU'AFO
What is that?

SON'A OFFICER #3
I don't know.
(the effect ends)
Systems don't seem affected...

SON'A OFFICER #2
Launch in fifteen seconds.

See the digital countdown display at 00:15.

263 ANGLE TO INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN - (OPTICAL) 263

to see the collector with its sails fully extended...

SON'A OFFICER #2
Ten seconds.

A tiny section of the collector is launched toward the rings...

SON'A OFFICER #2
Injector assembly launched.

As it enters, it begins to disperse gravitic [TECH] that sets off a chain reaction in the ring system... the very nature of the rings changes before our eyes, and flumes of particulate matter scatter away. The process continues racing along the rings... all of this is seen on the viewscreen...

264 CLOSE ON RU'AFO 264

He watches mesmerized, his vengeance finally satisfied.

RU'AFO
Exactly as the simulations predicted...

(CONTINUED)

SON'A OFFICER #2
Sir, I'm not showing any change in metaphasic flux levels...

265 WIDER - (OPTICAL) 265

RU'AFO
Your scanners must be malfunctioning. Flux parameters should be increasing exponentially...

SON'A OFFICER #2
(off console, puzzled)
All ship functions are off-line.

Ru'afo reacts, turns to a station and presses panels...

RU'AFO
How can there be no ship functions if the viewscreen is working, artificial gravity is stable, life support is...

But his eyes catch something. He moves across the bridge to a small visual gap where a holo-grid is visible... his eyes react with horror... he reaches out, touches it...

RU'AFO
A holodeck?

He takes out a disruptor and fires it at the wall revealing a further portion of the holo-grid in the same effect we saw earlier with Picard and Data...

RU'AFO
A holodeck?

He fires again and again... revealing more of the grid... his repeated blasting eventually reveals a short flight of stairs... he leads the way up them...

266 INT. HOLO-SHIP BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 266

Barely more than a cockpit with a large window into space -- as they enter, Ru'afo reacts as he sees the rings are normal... his own ship is right there in front of him...

RU'AFO
(stunned, realizing)
We were transported to the holo-ship... when we reset our shields. Everything we saw... was an illusion.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RU'AFO (CONT'D)
(hitting his com-link)
Ru'afo, authorization delta two-one... override all interlink commands to injector assembly one.

He stands there, but his com-link responds simply...

SON'A COMPUTER
Unable to comply. Injector assembly one has been de-activated.

On his reaction...

267 INT. SON'A BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) 267

where Picard, Worf and Gallatin are firmly in command... see the real countdown display has been frozen at 2:12.

WORF
All injector [TECH] circuits are confirmed off-line.

PICARD
Decloak the holo-ship and engage a tractor beam, Mister Worf.

As Worf presses panels and the holo-ship DECLOAKS on the viewscreen, Picard presses a companel...

PICARD
Picard to Data.

268 INT. YACHT COCKPIT - (OPTICAL) 268

as the ship re-enters the planet's atmosphere, shaking badly, heating up... a piece of the roof breaks off...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Your status?

DATA
Precarious, sir... I am having trouble re-entering the atmosphere... I believe I will have to transport to the surface...

Data is heating up and turning red just as the rest of the ship is.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Understood. Well done.

DATA
Thank-you, sir.

He DEMATERIALIZES. A beat later, the yacht disintegrates in the atmosphere.

269 INT. HOLO-SHIP COCKPIT 269

Ru'afo is frustrated...

RU'AFO
This ship is equipped with fourteen long range transporters... they're all useless...

SON'A OFFICER #2
(working the console)
They must have been locked and secured after we were beamed here.

RU'AFO
Isolate one and re-route its command sequence through the auxiliary processor...

SON'A OFFICER #3
Sir, there's nothing we can do... they already have control of our ship.

RU'AFO
I don't plan on going back to our ship.

270 EXT. SPACE - BRIAR PATCH - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 270

on it's way back...

271 INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE 271

Riker at Command, La Forge at Ops, Perim at Conn, Nara at Tactical. Basic repairs have been done, but the bridge still shows signs of the battle.

NARA
Sir, we're within sensor range of the Son'a ship.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NARA (CONT'D)
I'm picking up Captain Picard's com-signal on board...

Off Riker's reaction...

272 INT. SON'A BRIDGE 272

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Enterprise to Picard...

PICARD
(reacts)
Number One.

RIKER'S COM VOICE
We should be at your position in seven minutes. Do you need assistance...

PICARD
Negative. Did you succeed?

273 INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE 273

RIKER
The Council has ordered a halt to the Ba'ku relocation while they conduct a top-level review.

274 INT. SON'A BRIDGE 274

PICARD
Top level review, my ass. There'll be no cover-up of this. Not after I get...

WORF
Captain...

He motions to the digital display... counting backwards at 2:05 now... Picard reacts... Gallatin works the controls...

GALLATIN
The countdown control has been transferred to the collector... I can't override...

PICARD
Scan for lifesigns.

WORF
One. It's Ru'afo.

PICARD
Can you beam him off?

WORF
Negative. He's established a security field around the control room...

PICARD
Is there any other way to disable the injector?

Gallatin thinks, then calls up...

275 ANGLE (OPTICAL) - COMPUTER DISPLAY 275

The graphic shows the collector and isolates and magnifies the section that we saw launched into the rings in the simulation...

GALLATIN
We'd have to remove the [TECH] circuit directly from the injector assembly...

276 ANGLE NEW GRAPHIC SHOWING INJECTOR INTERIOR 276

to help understand what Picard has to remove...

GALLATIN (CONT'D)
...it's attached by four gravitomagnetic clamps to the ignition matrix... but Captain, in two minutes, that injector is going to be launched into the rings...

277 RESUME 277

WORF
Sir, I volunteer to...

Picard moves toward a transport station, starts to remove his jacket...

PICARD
Denied, Commander. I have no intention of informing your bride that you're not coming home...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (CONT'D)
prepare to beam me over.

The countdown is at 1:41...

278 INT. COLLECTOR - (OPTICAL) 278

The weird cavernous room is left with a skeleton of structural elements now that all the sails are fully unfurled... it almost reminds of the support for an old-time roller coaster -- a cobweb of crisscrossing pipes, and conduits and planks... there are signs of pre-launch -- hissing gasses, ice breaking away from the injector as fastening elements slide away... finding...

279 RU'AFO - (OPTICAL) 279

in a control area safely removed from the injector, working controls... the digital display moving back from 1:35... he doesn't immediately see --

280 ANGLE - PICARD - (OPTICAL) 280

MATERIALIZING... near the injector. This is not an area built for manned operation... so Picard has to make do with the structural elements... he's been beamed to a platform a few yards from the injector... and now he has to crawl across what is essentially a plank on his back... under the injector...

281 ANGLE (OPTICAL) - LOOKING DOWN ON PICARD 281

moving across the plank... the dark recesses of the vast chamber below him... he slides into a grill, with many open spaces, attached to the injector...

282 ANGLE FAVORING HIS POV - THE [TECH] CIRCUIT - (OPTICAL) 282

showing the countdown at 1:19... he takes out a tool and goes to work, still lying on his back... he inserts the tool and removes the panel cover to expose the interior of the ignition matrix...

283 WITH RU'AFO - (OPTICAL) 283

as an alarm goes off on his console... he reacts... switches off the forcefield and goes out to look up at --

284 HIS POV - PICARD - (OPTICAL) 284

working on the injector...

285 WIDE - (OPTICAL) 285

as Ru'afo fires a hand weapon at Picard... it ricochets off structural elements and misses but...

286 PICARD 286

knows he's running out of time now... he works on removing an interior safety screen that shields the components... it finally slips off... the countdown hits 1:09...

287 RU'AFO - (OPTICAL) 287

starts climbing toward him...

288 PICARD - (OPTICAL) 288

reaches in to pull out the [TECH] circuit but a small forcefield blocks his hand... he frowns... examines the security sensors, begins to disconnect them...

289 RU'AFO - (OPTICAL) 289

starts to cross the same plank as Picard did... their eyes connect...

290 ON THE INJECTOR'S GRILL - (OPTICAL) 290

Picard succeeds in defeating the security system... the forcefield fritzes off... the countdown at :47... he reaches for the component but Ru'afo gets there first... lunges at Picard, seconds before he can complete his task. They grapple across the grill and Picard slips through one of the openings...

291 ANGLE EMPHASIZING THE FALL - (OPTICAL) 291

...Picard barely catching himself by grabbing on to the grill...

292 RU'AFO 292

starts to uncurl...

293 PICARD'S FINGERS 293

holding onto the grill... trying to force him to let go...

294 PICARD - (OPTICAL) 294

grimaces, looks to see:

295 THE DIGITAL DISPLAY HITS :20 295

296 RESUME - (OPTICAL) 296

The ignition matrix engages and the nitrogen flow that follows throws Ru'afo slightly off-balance... Picard knowing it's now or never, releases one hand and grabs Ru'afo by the neck and yanks his head down hard against the grill, stunning him... Picard pulls himself up and moves quickly into the blinding nitrogen toward the detonation circuit again... he literally disappears for a brief second... as Ru'afo comes back at him again... the countdown at :10... Ru'afo pulls him away from the controls... :05... Picard leaps for the plank he crawled over on... Ru'afo looks at...

297 HIS POV - THE DETONATION CIRCUIT 297

and it's *gone!*

298 RU'AFO 298

reacts... looks at...

299 PICARD 299

on the plank who holds up the circuit for him to see...

PICARD
Looking for this?

300 THE DIGITAL DISPLAY - 0:00 300

301 TWO SHOT: PICARD AND RU'AFO - (OPTICAL) 301

perhaps no more than a foot apart... but an instant later, Ru'afo slides away with the injector as it's launched... a protective forcefield zaps into place as it enters space... Picard watches as it moves toward the rings...

302 EXT. COLLECTOR - CONTINUOUS (OPTICAL) 302

As we saw in the simulation, the injector continues to move toward the rings...

303 INT. INJECTOR - ANGLE THROUGH THE FORCEFIELD - (OPTICAL) 303

to see the rings getting closer and closer... and as we burst into them... the bright colorful metaphasic dust and gases swirling around us like a hurricane...

304 RU'AFO - (OPTICAL) 304

begins to change... growing younger and younger... face-lift falls into middle-age... then young adulthood... then adolescence... then childhood. White out.

305 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY 305

The Ba'ku returning from the hills... Troi waves from a distance... and we move to see Riker, standing with Worf (back in uniform), waving back...

WORF
Have I mentioned the unanticipated rewards I've discovered in a permanent relationship...?

RIKER
'*Permanent*'... that sounds like a long time, Worf.

WORF
(with irony)
Life is short, Commander.

Worf leaves Riker to think about that...

(CONTINUED)

and as we move away with him, he takes us to Gallatin watching the children play tag in the high grass with a personal longing.

306 ANGLE TO SEE PICARD, ANIJ AND SOJEF - (OPTICAL) 306

walking slowly observing Gallatin. Anij is almost fully recovered. Picard is back in uniform.

SOJEF
I wish there were a way to bring them back home.

PICARD
Ask them.

SOJEF
I'm afraid there's too much bitterness... on both sides.

They pause as they notice Crusher escorting a young Ba'ku woman... returning from the mountains... she tries to recognize Gallatin... we're too far away to hear what is said... but the woman embraces Gallatin as a mother embraces a lost son... and Crusher looks over and smiles to Picard... before she leaves the couple alone... Anij looks to Picard, realizing --

ANIJ
Mother and son. You arranged this...?

PICARD
I thought it might begin the healing process.

Sojef considers Picard, shakes his hand with an unstated but deep appreciation for all that this offlander has done. He moves away to join Gallatin and his mother. Anij looks to Picard with love.

ANIJ
What am I going to do without you?

Picard reacts, slightly surprised that she has anticipated that he has to go.

PICARD
These are perilous times for the Federation. I can't abandon it to people who would threaten everything I've spent a lifetime defending. I have to go back...

(CONTINUED)

She nods, she knows...

PICARD
But I have three hundred and eighteen days of vacation time coming. I plan on using them.

ANIJ
I'll be here.

Worf moves over...

WORF
Captain, the Ticonderoga has moved into orbit. Command is in a hurry to have us return. The Gorens are still waiting for a mediator.

Picard considers a beat and looks back to Worf, understated, but with a subtext that promises massive fireworks back home --

PICARD
They'll have to wait a little longer. I'm going back to Earth to... *slow things down* a little at the Federation Council.

QUARK'S VOICE
Worf!

They turn to see a Ferengi (QUARK) approaching in a bathing suit with a beach umbrella and two barely dressed Dabo girls...

WORF
What are you doing here, Quark?

QUARK
The same thing everyone else in the quadrant is going to be doing here... as soon as I build the greatest *spa* in the galaxy...
(sotto)
...these people don't have any religious thing about casinos do they...?

PICARD
There will be no spas constructed on this planet.

QUARK
Do I know you?

PICARD
(ignoring the question)
This world is about to become a Federation protectorate.

ANIJ
...We are...?

PICARD
(to Quark)
...So we can protect it from exploitation by people like you.

QUARK
Explain to me how five thousand time-share units... right there along the lake... would be 'exploiting' anyone.

Picard glances to Anij -- understand now?

ANIJ
We are.

PICARD
Mister Worf, have this uninvited... *offlander* and his guests beamed to the Enterprise. We'll deposit him at Deep Space Nine when we drop you off. *

WORF
Must you, sir?

Worf takes Quark away by the scruff of his beach shirt... his disappointed babes follow... trailing away --

QUARK
You'll hear from my Nagus.

They're gone.

ANIJ
You think your mighty Federation would be interested in protecting six hundred people?

PICARD
The "mighty" Federation could learn a few things from this village... * *

He kisses her.

(CONTINUED)

The signature hummingbird appears, sweeping up in the breeze and hovers briefly in front of them... and as he takes her hand to his cheek...

307 THE HUMMINGBIRD (OPTICAL) 307

slows... its wing movements becoming ever more fluid and gentle... as the moment extends...

308 ANGLE ON TROI, CRUSHER, WORF, LA FORGE AND RIKER 308

prepared to transport...

LA FORGE
Where's Data?

309 ANGLE - THE HIGH GRASS 309

a shot like our opening shot... except the head that peeks through the grass this time is Data's... and as we widen, we see he has taken Artim's earlier advice and is playing tag with all the kids...

CRUSHER
(calling)
Data! It's time to go!

Data stands up straight as he hears the voice, looks at Artim a long beat... and this is a kid's moment, underplaying the sentiment the way kids would...

DATA
I have to go home now.

ARTIM
Bye.

Data nods...

DATA
Bye.

Artim smiles as Data joins the others... *

ARTIM
Don't forget -- you've got to play a little bit every day.

Data acknowledges...

RIKER
Good advice.

(CONTINUED)

Riker takes Troi's hand suggesting perhaps a new permanent commitment. Picard moves to join the others, presses his combadge.

PICARD
Enterprise... seven to beam up.
Energize.

Picard exchanges a final look with Anij as they DEMATERIALIZE.

310 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - (OPTICAL) 310

leaves orbit and as it moves into space...

FADE OUT.

THE END